

P A R T
O F
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

Translated from the ORIGINAL ITALIAN,

By W. H U G G I N S, Esq;

Passando all' Ariosto lo scolare entra in un mar di piacere per la facilità dello stile, non meno che per la vaghezza e varietà del soggetto, e finalmente per la novità e vivezza e insieme sublimità delle imagini, delle quali tutto il suo Poema è asperso.

MARTINELLI Lett. Fam. Crit.



IMPRESSIO.
E PROELIS
ARCHIBALDI HAMILTON
TYPOGRAPHI LONDINENS.



PAPYRUS.
EX OFFICINIS CHARTARUM
RICHARDI PIM.
APUD HEARLEY, COM. SOUTHTON.

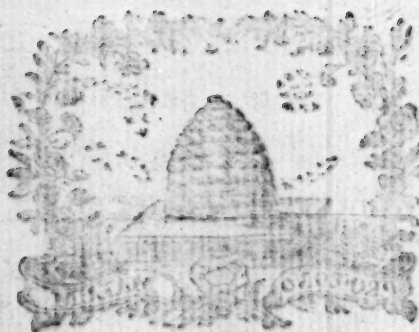
L O N D O N :

Printed for JAMES RIVINGTON and JAMES FLETCHER, at the Oxford Theatre in Paternoster-Row; and JOHN COOK, Bookseller at Farnham in Surry.

MDCCCLIX.



From the
Library fund
subscribed in 1842





CANDID READER,

PERMIT me to assure you, upon the word of a gentleman, and the faith of a christian, I have most strictly prohibited myself the inspection of the copy of those Cantos in my former book, which another, through most earnest solicitations, was, too weakly, by me admitted to be concerned in: for fear of being thrown into any similitude of turn or identity of rhyme.

But, it can scarcely be imagined, one, who, by his immense labour in translation of a most sublime and favorite poem, proceeded to the finishing forty Cantos, could stand in need of any *aid* for three whole ones and four fragments: and, that, from a person instructed by myself in the A. B. C. of the language. So far from such effect, it has been absolutely the reverse; for where I have, after comparison, found casually some resemblance, I have set to making alterations, where it was feasible, for the better, but, when I have, at last, discovered it either impracticable, or too laborious so to do, and might, possibly, be for the worse, I have judged it proper to desist: not conceiving it necessary to quit a main path, which lay so natural, it could scarce be avoided, to jump over rocks or through brambles, because another had step'd thereon before me.

The

The motives for suffering another to appear as the editor, with the high honours which were conferred upon him therefrom, together with an infinitude of favours done, must be as little interesting to the publick, as is the return which has been received.

The cause, which was productive of this new rendering, will need no Oedipus for its solution, on perusal of the initial and final mottos annexed to the studies of

Your friend

and well-wisher,

Headley Park, Hants.
June 23, 1758.

W. H.

C A N T O

SIMULATUM TOLLITUR AUXILIUM!

ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXI.

1.
NO cordage twisted, with such ligament,
Binds load, I think, nor wood by nail's fast
press'd,
As faith, with knot, to be asunder rent
Too strong, environs still the gen'rous breast :
Therefore, it seems, the ancients did invent
To cause in such way sacred truth be dress'd,
With a white veil, cover'd from head to foot,
Which one sole speck with blemish could pollute.

2.
Our faith we never ought to violate,
Whether to thousands plighted or to one :
Wherefore, in wood recluse or grove's retreat,
Remote from busy city and from town,
As if at the tribunal's crouded seat,
Of evidence, in legal form, wrote down,
Without an oath or without farther proof,
Our promise, once gone forth, is bond enough.

3.
This well observ'd, as he was bound to do,
In ev'ry enterprize, the knight Zerbin :
And, how he it regarded, here did show,
When he his purpos'd journey did decline,
With her to travel, who caus'd him such woe,
As if were near him malady malign,
Or death itself; but far more prevalent
Now was his promise, than his first intent.

4.
I said of him, that now this wretch to see
Under his guidance, so did him torment,
With rage his heart so tore, not word said
he,
But silent, fullen they together went :
I said, was broke that taciturnity,
What time the sun from our horizon went,
By meeting an advent'rous, errant knight,
On whom they, in the midway, chanc'd to light.

5.
Th' old woman, as to her this knight was known,
Who th' name, Hermonides of Holland, bore,
Who, for his arms, on sable 'scutcheon,
Charg'd thereon crossways bend vermilion wore,
Her semblance insolent and pride lay'd down,
In humble guise now Zerbin does implore;
And caus'd him on his promise to reflect,
To th' female warrior, that he'd her protect.

6.
For, 'gainst her and her kin, on malice bent
This warrior was, and now 'gainst her came on :
He had destroy'd her father innocent,
Her brother too, who was her only one :
And such way was the rest to treat intent,
As to the others had the traitor done.
Since, lady, you yourself find in my care,
Zerbin said, I would have you banish fear,

B

The cavalier, more nigh when cast his fight,
 Upon that face, which he had so in hate,
 Either prepare yourself with me to fight,
 Cry'd out, with fierce, intimidating threat,
 Or the defence of that old woman quit,
 Who from my hand shall find her suiting fate.
 If you fight for her, dead you shall remain;
 For so it falls to those, who wrong maintain.

8.

Zerbin reply'd to him, with courtesy;
 It did desire of evil fort betray,
 And corresponded ill with chivalry,
 To strive to take a woman's life away:
 That he the combat was prepar'd to try;
 But, first, to well consider on him lay,
 How knight genteel, for he as such did shew,
 Would in a female's blood his hand embrue.

9.

These words he said to him, and more, in vain,
 And is compell'd to come to deeds at last:
 When they fit stretch had taken on the plain,
 Furious, full-speed, they to th' encounter pass'd:
 When feast of public joy they entertain,
 Not sky-rockets are with such swiftness cast,
 As forward push'd both their war-horses fleet,
 Together the two cavaliers, to meet.

10.

Hermonides of Holland pointed low;
 For he to wound the right side did intend;
 But his weak lance did into pieces go,
 And little did the Scottish knight offend:
 Of th' other faint was not or vain the blow,
 Broke shield and so did thro' the shoulder rend,
 It from one side to t'other fairly pierc'd:
 Hermonides fell on the plain, revers'd.

11.

Zerbin, who on him as now slain did look,
 By pity vanquish'd, sudden leapt to ground,
 And from his pallid face his helmet took:
 And th' warrior, as if wak'd from sleep profound,
 Gaz'd, fix'd, on Zerbin, nor a word he spoke:
 At length he said, my mind it does not wound,
 That I'm by you beat down, who semblance bear,
 Of errant knighthood that the flow'r you are.

12.

But much it grieves me, thro' th' occasion
 Of treach'rous woman it to me falls out,
 To whom, I know not how, you're champion,
 Which too ill suiting is your valour stout:
 And when to you the reason shall be known,
 That me, to vengeance take on her, has brought,
 On cool reflection, you'll have sorrow still,
 That you, for her escape, have done me ill.

7

13.

And, if sufficient breath remains to me,
 It to relate; but the reverse I fear,
 I'll cause you know, beyond the last degree,
 This woman claims in wickedness her share.
 I had a brother, in minority,
 Who went from Holland, whence we natives are,
 And from Heraclius he knighthood gain'd,
 Who then o'er Greece the sovereignty maintain'd.

14.

Then he became, like brother, intimate
 With courteous baron, who was of that court,
 Who, upon Servia bord'ring, had a seat
 Well fortify'd with walls, a sweet resort:
 He Argeo named was, of whom I treat,
 Spouse of this woman of the vilest sort:
 He her ador'd, far in more great degree,
 Than suiting for so worthy man as he.

15.

But she, than leaves, more voluble of mind,
 When by autumnal season render'd dry,
 Which trees despoils with its cold blasts of wind,
 And circling they before its fury fly,
 Soon tow'rd's her husband became disinclin'd,
 Tho' she her heart sometime held steadily:
 And turn'd ev'ry her thought, all her desire,
 My brother for her lover to acquire.

16.

But 'gainst the seas tempestuous ne'er so fast
 The evil-fam'd Acroceranus stood,
 Nor aged pine against the northern blast,
 Which hundred years its foliage has renew'd,
 And as 'bove th' Alps extend its branches vast,
 So under ground its roots their course pursu'd,
 As did my brother by her courtship press'd,
 Of ev'ry horrid vice the wicked nest.

17.

Now, as to knight courageous may arise,
 Who seeks out strife and finds it frequently,
 My brother wounded was in an emprise,
 At place to his companion's castle nigh:
 Where he, without an invitation, hies;
 So us'd, if Argeo were or were not by:
 And he herein stop'd, there to take his rest,
 Till he his ills receiv'd should have redress'd.

18.

While in this house he lay, it did betide,
 Argeo on certain bus'ness needs must go:
 Sudden this graceless woman came and try'd
 My brother, in the stile she us'd to do;
 But faithful he no longer could abide,
 With guilty punctures to be harass'd so,
 Chose, to preserve his faith inviolate,
 Of many ills what smallest he did estimate.

19

19.

'Mongst many ills, this had his option :
 To quit with Argeo his long amity,
 To go far off from thence, that no more known
 His name might to this wicked woman be :
 This extreme hard was ; but was juster one
 Than her perverted will to satisfy :
 Or the wife's crime to th' husband to relate,
 Who felt for her a passion so inordinate.

20.

And, tho' not yet recover'd of his wound,
 Puts on his arms and from the castle went :
 A mind he bore that steady was and found,
 Ne'er to return unto that quarter bent ;
 But all defence, all safe guard vain he found,
 Fortune's new tricks the whole did circumvent.
 Behold the husband, i'th' mean time, returns,
 And finds the wife, who lamentably mourns.

21.

With locks dischevell'd, face of crimson dye :
 And he, what had disturb'd her so, enquir'd :
 E'er she was mov'd to give him a reply,
 She caus'd herself be frequently desir'd :
 Thinking mean time, what way she best could try,
 T'avenge herself on him, who thus retir'd :
 And well it suits mind apt to fluctuate,
 To change her love to instantaneous hate.

22.

At last, said : ah ! wherefore should I conceal
 The crime, I, in your absence, did commit ?
 For tho' I to the world don't it reveal,
 My conscience can't such secrecy admit :
 The soul, that does such foul conviction feel,
 Within by such sharp penitence is finit,
 As does all corp'ral punishment exceed,
 That could be to me, for my fault decreed.

23.

If what per force is done, a fault may be,
 Be't what it will, to you I'll all relate :
 Then with your sword, from its foul bark, set free
 My soul, which white is and immaculate :
 And my eyes darken to eternity,
 That, after such disgrace, unfortunate,
 At least I mayn't be forc'd to hold them down,
 Or blush, thro' shame, whoe'er I look upon.

24.

My honour your companion has betray'd,
 This body has possess'd by violence :
 And, lest the whole to you I w'd tell, afraid,
 The villain, no leave taking, fled from hence.
 In hatred him she brought, by what she said,
 For whom before he friendship had intense,
 Argeo believes it, nor for more does stay ;
 But takes his arms and for his vengeance hastes away.

25.

And, as to him the country was well known,
 O'ertakes him, e'er he could much distance make ;
 For that my brother gently travell'd on,
 Without suspicion, being sick and weak :
 And sudden, in a lonely station,
 He now seiz'd on him, his revenge to take.
 Nor excuse valid could my brother find ;
 For Argeo on the fight had fix'd his mind.

26.

One was in health, inflam'd with new rais'd hate,
 T'other infirm, in long-us'd amity :
 So that my brother was in feeble state,
 'Gainst his companion made his enemy :
 Philander, who deserv'd a better fate,
 O' th' hapless youth, of whom I speak to ye,
 That was the name, unable to sustain
 The force of such a fight, a pris'ner did remain.

27.

Forbid it heaven ! tho' me to such a way,
 My fury just and your demerit brought,
 To him said Argeo, that I you should slay,
 Whom I lov'd, and you me lov'd, sure I thought :
 Tho' in the end you thus did me betray ;
 For I'm dispos'd that the whole world be taught,
 That I to you superior am approv'd,
 As well in hatred, as when you I lov'd.

28.

By other way I'll punish your misdeed,
 Than in your blood my hand more to embrue ;
 Thus speaking, caus'd them put upon the steed
 A sort of beir compos'd of verdant yew :
 And with him almost dead bid them proceed,
 Into a castle's dungeon shut from view,
 Where he, for a perpetual punishment,
 Condemn'd, a pris'ner to remain, this innocent.

29.

Howe'er, of naught he found deficiency,
 Except his freedom thence to get away ;
 For that, in other matters, frank and free
 He gave command and all did him obey.
 But, with unwearied mind, remaining, she,
 In thought to execute her base essay,
 The prison visited continually,
 Having, at will to open it, the key.

30.

And, tow'rs my brother still new arts would try,
 And with more boldness, than she us'd of late,
 Says, what avails this your fidelity,
 Since all as perfidy they estimate ?
 O, glorious premium of your triumphs high !
 O, what rich captures ! O, what spoils elate !
 O, what requital just to you results,
 When, as a traitor, each one you insults !

31.

With what more honour, more utility,
 Could you have granted that, for which I sue !
 Of this your obstinate severity,
 Take the reward to your great merit due :
 Remain in prison, nor hope thence to fly,
 E'er foster passion your hard heart subdue ;
 But, when you gratify me, I'll contrive,
 Your forfeit fame and liberty to give.

32.

No, no, Philander says, ne'er hope conceive,
 My faith, as heretofore, remains not true :
 Tho' it falls out that I from thence receive
 So harsh reward, to me by no means due :
 And let the world of me much ill believe,
 Suffice, before him, who can all things view,
 And me with grace eternal recompense,
 Clearly shall be descry'd my innocence.

33.

If my restraint can't Argeo satisfy,
 Let him me of my toilsome life bereave :
 Perhaps my premium heav'n will not deny
 For the good work, they here so ill receive :
 Perhaps he, who thinks I've done injury,
 When my departing soul this body leave,
 Will call to mind, that me he wrong has done,
 And will lament his faithful, dead companion.

34.

Thus many times this woman impudent
 Philander try'd ; but still without effect :
 But her blind wish, which was all diligent
 With skill her wicked passion to direct,
 Caus'd her to search, with inmost thought intent,
 Her arts accusom'd and on all reflect :
 A thousand thoughts in different ways pursues,
 E'er she could fix her mind which she shou'd chuse.

35.

She stay'd six months away, nor foot she set
 As formerly she us'd, i'th' dungeon,
 Which did in poor Philander hope create,
 That she no more held her affection.
 Behold, to evil still propitious, fate,
 Gave, to this woman vile, occasion,
 To gain the ends, with memorable ill,
 Of her irrational, misguided will.

36.

The husband had long time an enmity
 Against a baron nam'd Morando Fair,
 So bold, in Argeo's absence, frequently
 Alone he w'd haste and to this seat repair ;
 But Argeo there, he w'd all temptation fly,
 Nor would he come in ten miles distance near ;
 But, to induce him to come thither now,
 He feign'd, he to Jerus'lem went to pay a vow.

37.

He feign'd to go : and went, that ev'ry one
 Saw him : and caus'd it nois'd on ev'ry side :
 And this his thought, except his wife alone,
 None knew, in whom he solely did confide.
 Turns to his dwelling, when the air grew brown,
 Nor e'er till night therein himself does hide :
 And, with arms counterfeit, at break of day,
 Unseen by any ever gets away.

38.

By different quarters wand'ring he does wind,
 And wheeling does around his mansion stray,
 To see if credulous Morand' inclin'd
 There to resort, as was his usual way :
 I'th' wood all day stopt : and when he did find,
 The sun his rays absconded in the sea,
 Comes to the castle, and by secret gates
 His faithless consort to admit him waits.

39.

Each one believes, except this woman base,
 That Argeo was a many miles from thence :
 Therefore the season fit she does embrace,
 Goes to my brother, with new vile pretence :
 Of tears to flow at will she ready has
 A show'r, which rain from eyes to breast apace.
 Where can I go, she says, to seek for aid,
 That my whole honour may not be betray'd ?

40.

Nay and my husband's jointly with my own :
 I should no terror have, were he but near.
 You know Morando and to you is known,
 He, Argeo absent, Gods nor men does fear ;
 Now me he threatens, now does petition
 Incessant ; nor my servants does forbear
 To bribe, to draw me to his wicked mind :
 I know not where I can assistance find.

41.

Now, as he knows, my spouse from hence is got,
 And his return will not in haste be made,
 With insolence he has my mansion sought,
 Without pretext or ceremony paid :
 Yet if my lord were present on the spot,
 Not only he to come had been afraid ;
 But not have thought, with his security,
 T'approach these walls so much as three miles nigh.

42.

And what he oft, by message, did intreat,
 He now demanded of me, face to face :
 And thus I've been in apprehension great,
 That to me shame might happen and disgrace :
 And if I us'd not to him language sweet,
 And feign'd, I will'd, his wishes should take place,
 By force, from this rapacious, that might be,
 Which, from my words, he hopes for, quietly.

43.
I promise gave, which ne'er to keep I meant ;
For contract made thro' fear we deem as none :
But my design was such act to prevent,
As, at that time, he would by force have done.
This the case is : you sole can circumvent :
All prospect of my honour else is gone,
And of my Argeo's : who, you me have told,
In value higher than yourself you hold.

44.
Therefore I'll say, if this you me deny,
That faith, you boast of, you do not possess ;
But, that it only was from cruelty,
That you despis'd my supplicant address :
Not from respect to Argeo, constantly
You with that shield my passion did suppress.
Betwixt us two, conceal'd had been that case ;
But here results my manifest disgrace.

45.
It suits not, said Philander, of such kind
Prologue to me, dispos'd to serve my friend :
Relate to me, how is your will inclin'd ;
For, what I've been I still to be intend :
And tho' unjustly such return I find,
I do not let the guilt to him extend :
For him, I'm ready ev'n to death to go,
Tho' th' world oppose me, nay, my fortune too.

46.
She wicked answer'd : I w'd have you destroy
This wretch, who our dishonour would procure :
Nor need you fear to meet the least annoy ;
For I'll mark out to you the way secure :
He is to come, supposing me less coy,
At the third hour of midnight most obscure,
And, on the signal, he's appriz'd of, made,
He's in, by me, unseen by all, to be convey'd.

47.
Let not your waiting for me you molest,
In my apartment, tho' no light be there,
Till him I cause himself of arms divest,
And then, as naked, to your hands I bear.
Thus, to conduct, the wife herself address'd,
Her husband into the tremendous snare :
If rightly such one we a wife can stile,
More than infernal fury, cruel, vile.

48.
Soon as arriv'd the ill-appointed night,
She call'd my brother, who his sword had ta'en,
And kept him, in her chamber void of light,
Till the poor master should return again :
As she had order'd, all fell out too right ;
For evil counsel rarely turns out vain :
And so Philander the good Argeo smote,
What time, that this Morando was, he thought.

49.
Him thro' his head and neck, at one stroke, cleav'd,
As he no helmet had him to defend :
Argeo, without one motion made, receiv'd
Of bitter life the miserable end :
By such one kill'd, as could have ne'er believ'd
So strange a case, much less could e'er intend :
Meaning to help, he to his friend did do
Worse, than he would have acted to his foe.

50.
Mean while on earth Argeo unknown did lay,
My brother to Gabrine his sword resign'd :
Gabrine's her name, who born was to betray,
That should fall in her hands, the whole mankind.
She, who the truth till now ne'er would display,
Was, that Philander should go see, inclin'd,
With light in's hand, the man, he guilty slew :
And Argeo his companion dear does shew.

51.
And after threaten'd, if he w'd now gainfay,
Her am'rous, long desire to satisfy,
To all the people she would open lay
What he had done, which vainly he w'd deny :
And that she w'd cause, in ignominious way,
He should as traytor and assassin die :
And him reminds, his fame he should not slight,
Altho' his life he held so very light.

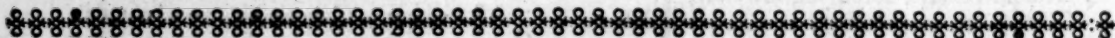
52.
With dread and fore affliction stood dismay'd
Philander, when his error he found out :
His fury, first, almost did him persuade,
To kill her ; and he stood, some time, in doubt :
And if his reason did not rather guide,
Than, that he was in hostile house, the thought,
As in his hand no weapon now he bore,
He with his teeth to pieces her had tore.

53.
As sometimes vessel, on the sea profound,
Smitten, oppress'd by two winds different,
Which forward now by one is forc'd to bound,
To its first point by t'other backward sent,
And they from stem to stern have wheel'd it round,
At last is driv'n by the most violent :
Such way Philander, rack'd by different doubt,
Fix'd upon that, which he least evil thought.

54.
Reason to him the danger vast did show,
Besides his death, of foul and shameful end :
If thro' the house news of the murder go,
And short the time is, h'ad in thought to spend :
At last he is forc'd, whether he will or no,
The cup most bitter down his throat to send :
So, finally, in his afflicted heart,
Fear had, than obstinacy, greater part.

55.
 Fear of foul punishment, with infamy,
 Caus'd him with thousand oaths a promise make,
 That he w'd with all Gabrina's will comply,
 If from this place safe with her him she w'd take.
 Thus she by wicked force did satisfy
 Her passion and those walls they then forsake :
 So back again to us Philander came,
 And he in Greece left stigmatiz'd his name.

56.
 And bore his friend fix'd in his memory,
 Whom he had in so stupid manner slain,
 To aid, with his fore hurt, vile treachery
 Of a Medea, Progne inhumain :
 And if his oaths and strict fidelity
 In their strong bondage did not him restrain,
 When he was safe, he her to death had sent :
 But much as could be held her in hate violent.



CANTO XXII.

1.
YE courteous ladies, to your lovers, kind,
 Ye, with one lover only, wh' are content,
 As, 'mongst so many of ye, of that mind
 We meet with one, but by rare accident,
 Let not displease those lines, you left behind,
 Which 'gainst Gabrine, I spoke so vehement :
 And if I should employ yet farther verse,
 In laying blame upon her mind perverse.

2.
 Such was she : and, in task, upon me lay'd
 By high command, I can't from truth depart :
 Hence on your honour high is cast no shade,
 On one or other with unblemish'd heart,
 Who, to the Jews, for coin, his Lord betray'd,
 No shame to John or Peter did impart :
 Nor does it Hypermnestra's fame disgrace,
 That she was sister of so many women base.

3.
 For one, which here my song makes bold to blame,
 As so demands the story, I endite,
 Of hundreds, I intend to chaunt the fame,
 And make their virtue, than the sun, more bright.
 But turning to the various work, I frame,
 Which many (thank 'em) do by no means slight,
 I told you, that the Scottish cavalier,
 Not far off, did exalted clamours hear.

4.
 He by strait path betwixt two mountains went,
 Whence came the noise : nor did he far proceed,
 Before he got, where, in a vale close pent,
 A cavalier he saw before him dead.
 Who 'twas I'll tell ; but first 'tis my intent,
 To get from France and for the East to speed,
 Until Astolf the Paladine I find,
 Who tow'rd the East his route had now inclin'd.

5.
 I left him in that place of cruelty,
 From whence he with his horn's tremendous roar,
 Had caus'd that people treacherous to fly,
 And himself out of danger round him bore :
 And to hoist sail compell'd his company,
 With great disgrace to hurry from that shore.
 Now foll'wing him, I say, his road he took
 Along Armenia and that country he forsook.

6.
 And after some days in Natolia
 Arriv'd : and towards Prussia did proceed :
 From thence continuing his purpos'd way
 This side the sea for Thracia he did speed :
 Along the Danube pass'd Hungaria,
 And as if wings for flight possess'd his steed
 In less than twenty days pass'd by the Rhine,
 And thro' Morav', Bohem', Franconia does incline.

7.
 Ardenna's forest he to Aix, pass'd through,
 Brabant in Flanders : he embark'd at last :
 The gale of wind that to the westward blew
 Forward his vessel with such pressure cast,
 That at mid-day he England had in view
 At no great distance, where to shore he pass'd :
 Mounted his steed, and him so spur'd and smote,
 That, ere it night was, he to London got.

8.
 There hearing after, that king Otho old,
 Now many months past, was in Paris pent,
 And that of late almost each baron bold
 Had follow'd his example excellent,
 He strait to go to France in mind does hold,
 And back again to th' Thames's haven went,
 From whence with swelling sail he out does go,
 Tow'rd Calais caus'd them to direct the prow.

9.
A gentle breeze; abaft which lightly blew,
Entic'd the bark to sea by kindly blast:
Then gain'd more strength and by degrees it grew,
And rose till it the pilot's skill surpass'd:
That he's compell'd to turn his poop anew,
Or he himself beneath the shore must cast:
O'er the swol'n sea foreright his ship does send,
And the course changes which he did intend.

10.
Now to the right, now flies to the left hand,
This way and that, wherever fortune bore:
At last to Roan nigh he takes to land:
And soon as e'er he reach'd the wish'd for shore,
To saddle Rabican he gives command,
Girds on his sword and all the arms he wore,
Pursues his way and his horn with him has,
Which the defence of thousands can surpass.

11.
And came, when he cross a wide forest beat,
To a bright spring at a hill's shady foot,
What time the flocks are driven from their meat,
I'th' fold or under hollow mountain shut:
And by his thirst fatigu'd and scorching heat,
Tir'd he his helmet off his forehead put,
His steed among the thickest boughs made fast,
And then to drink to the cool stream did haste.

12.
E'er he his lips extended to the brook,
A countryman, who lay conceal'd hard by,
Rush'd from the thorny brake: his steed he took,
Mounts on him and strait off with him does fly:
Astolfo heard the noise, about does look,
And when he saw so plain his injury,
Forakes the fountain and his drink does slight,
On foot pursuing with his utmost might.

13.
This thief did not at swiftest rate proceed;
For suddenly he out of sight had got;
But now his bridle pulling in, now freed,
Goes on a gallop now and now strong trot:
After long winding, thro' the wood they speed,
Till both of them arriv'd were to the spot,
Where of brave barons such a noble host,
Than in a prison, more their freedom lost.

14.
The countryman into the palace fled,
With th' horse whose course was rapid as the wind:
Astolfo's forc'd, as shield him hindered,
His helm and arms, to follow far behind:
At last comes up: and all track vanished,
By which, as yet pursuing, he inclin'd;
For, no more Rabican or thief he spies,
And vainly hastes his feet and rowls his eyes.

15.
He hastes his feet, and still in vain he sought,
The lodges, the apartments and the hall;
But the perfidious villain to find out,
His labour turns to no effect at all:
Where hid is Rabican, he's yet in doubt,
Above all others his fleet animal:
And fruitless he all that whole day does go,
Searching within, without, above, below.

16.
Tir'd with such wand'ring round, and stupefy'd,
That this place was enchanted, he does find:
And now the book, h'ad ever at his side,
Which Logistill in India him consign'd,
That, if e'er new enchantment him betide,
Himself he might relieve, he calls to mind:
To th' index has recourse, and soon does see
In what page was set down the remedy.

17.
Of the enchanted palace full did write
This book and the fit methods there were wrote,
The forc'er's science to confute outright,
And of those prisoners to set loose the knot.
Beneath the threshold was shut in a spright,
Who these deceptions and frauds did complot,
And the stone raising, where he hid does lie,
Dissolv'd, the palace into smoke would fly.

18.
Intent, on bringing to a glorious end,
The Paladin, an enterprise so high,
With expedition down his arm does bend,
Whether the marble heavy is, to try.
When, his hand near, Atlant does apprehend,
To make contemptible his sorcery,
Fearing, therefrom, what consequence may rise,
He new enchantments, to assault him, tries.

19.
He caus'd, by devilish masks he made him wear,
Him diff'rent seem from what he us'd to be:
Rustic, to this, to that, a giant rear,
To others, knight with great ferocity:
Each, in that form, Atlante did appear
To him i'th' wood, the Paladine does see:
So, what the Sorcerer had from them ta'en,
Each from Astolfo now goes to regain.

20.
Gradass, Iroldo, Bradamant, Ruggier,
Prasildo, Brandimart, o'th' chiefs the rest
Came forward, who in this new error were,
To crush the duke, enflam'd with rage each breast;
But sudden he his horn in mind did bear,
With which he their hearts insolent suppress'd:
If not assisted by that wound'rous sound,
Dead he had been, nor could have pardon found.

21.

But soon as to his mouth that horn he got,
And caus'd them round the horrid clangor hear,
Just as the pigeons do, when off is shot
A gun, off went in flight each cavalier :
Nor less was flight the necromancer's lot,
Not less from out his den he rush'd, thro' fear,
Pallid, dismay'd, does to such distance bound,
So that mayn't reach him that tremendous sound.

22.

The keeper fled with his late captive train :
Then from their stalls many steeds rush'd away ;
There needed more than ropes them to restrain,
And they their master's follow'd different way :
Nor mouse, nor cat did in the house remain,
At sound, fall on, fall on, that seem'd to say :
And, with the rest, off Rabican had got,
If, issuing forth, the duke him had not caught.

23.

Astolfo, when he'd made the forc'er fly,
The massy stone from forth the fill does rear :
And there he found some sort of imag'ry,
With other things, which I to write forbear :
And, eager to destroy the forcery,
All that he found he did to pieces tear :
As the book shew'd him what he ought to do,
And into smoke and cloud the palace flew.

24.

There he found out, that in a golden chain,
The horse belonging to Ruggier was ty'd :
That of the Moorish necromant I mean,
Which he had giv'n him to Alcine to ride :
For whom then Logistill contriv'd the rein,
Which back again him into France did guide,
And he from India into England went,
Keeping the left side of the continent.

25.

I know not, if you yet in mem'ry bear,
That day the rein he left fix'd to the tree,
When, from Ruggier, naked did disappear
Gelafron's daughter, in great mockery :
To all who saw him which seem'd wonder rare,
Back to his lord again the steed did flee,
And still continu'd with him till that day,
When the enchantment's pow'r was ta'n away.

26.

Astolfo could not more delighted be,
Than he was with this lucky incident,
Since he, to visit both the land and sea,
As yet not visited, was so intent :
And in few days round the whole world to flee,
Now Hippogryph his wishes could content :
He knew how well he suited him to ride,
As he elsewhere so often him had tried.

27.

Him he in India on that day had try'd,
What time the sage Melissa set him free
From that vile woman, who diversify'd
His human visage to wild mirtle tree :
And well he saw and knew, how to a guide
Subservient, by the bit, was render'd he,
Of Logistill, and how instructed was
Ruggier to make him at his pleasure pass.

28.

As, to take Hippogryph, he now judg'd right,
His saddle, which was near him, he apply'd,
And he, of many bridles, did unite,
From various things, one suiting him to guide ;
For, of the horses which had ta'en to flight,
A many different there around were ty'd.
Now, one thought only of his Rabican
Made him delay, ere he his flight began.

29.

He reason had, Rabican to esteem,
None was, to run the lance, more excellent :
And, on his back, from regions most extreme
Of India, quite to France he lately went.
Much he reflects : at length does fittest deem,
Rather unto friend's hand him to present,
Than there to leave him on the public way,
O'th' first, that chance might thither lead, the prey.

30.

He stay'd intent, if he could coming spy,
Along the wood, hunter or countryman,
Whom he could cause, thence, in his company,
Unto some city to lead Rabican.
All this whole day and till broke in the sky
The next, he waited looking out in vain :
The following morn, for yet 'twas scarcely light,
Along the wood, he thought he saw a knight.

31.

But it behoves me, if the rest I w'd show,
First find out Bradamante and Ruggier.
When hush'd the horn was and that lovely two
From that place at sufficient distance were,
What Atlant had conceal'd from them till now,
Ruggier inspecting soon discover'd clear :
Atlante had contriv'd, that, to this hour,
They, to each other know, should have no pow'r.

32.

Ruggier upon his Bradamant does gaze,
And she upon him look'd with vast surprize,
That had obscur'd, for them, so many days,
The strange illusion, both their mind and eyes.
Ruggier his arms around his fair one lays,
Her face more red than rose where crimson dyes :
Then from her lips he goes the sweets to prove
O'th' primal fruit of their now happy love.

33.

They their embraces o'er and o'er repeat,
A thousand times each other closely press'd
These happy lovers, with such joy replete,
It scarce could be contain'd within their breast :
Much them it grieves, that, by the forc'er's cheat,
In that misguided mansion so distress'd,
They never had been to each other known,
And that so many joyful days were lost and gone.

34.

Bradamant, who dispos'd was to comply
With ev'ry wish wife virgin should bestow
Upon her lover, that, anxiety,
Her honour safe, she might cause him forego,
Said to Ruggier: your will to satisfy,
Would you not, I hard and reluctant show,
By proper means, demand me of my fire ;
But first, to be baptis'd, I you require.

35.

Ruggier, inclin'd not only to comply
A christian to become, her love to gain,
As had his father been and anciently
His grandfire and whole race, illustrious train !
But, at that instant, her to gratify,
Would of his life have giv'n the whole remain,
Says, not in water only, but in fire
His head to put, were light, to her love to aspire.

36.

To be baptiz'd and then to make his bride
That lady, on his journey Ruggier's bent
For Vallombrose and Bradamant his guide,
That was the name by which the abby went,
Opulent, noble, and devout beside,
And to all such as came benevolent.
They met, as they from out the forest go,
Lady, whose visage seem'd o'erwhelm'd with woe.

37.

Ruggier humane, who still did courtesy
To ev'ry one, most to the ladies, show,
When he the lovely tears did falling see,
As down her visage delicate they flow,
Compassion felt and great curiosity
To learn her grief: and turning to her now,
After fit salutation, asked the case,
Whence was with briny flood bedew'd her face.

38.

And she then raising her bright watry eyes,
In courteous manner, answer to him made,
And the occasion of her miseries,
As he requir'd, to him all open lay'd :
My gentle Sir, you'll hear, to him replies,
In such profusion tears these cheeks invade,
Thro' my compassion, as for youth I fear,
Who suffers death to day, in castle near.

39.

He, loving damsel young, genteel and fair,
The daughter of Marsilius king of Spain,
Disguis'd, white veil and female gown did wear,
The very turn of eye and voice could feign :
He ev'ry night her company did bear,
Nor thought suspicious any entertain ;
But no one's skill'd to act with such reserve,
That some, in time, shan't mark him and observe.

40.

One this observ'd and did to two relate,
Those two to others, till to th' king 'twas spoke :
Last night came there o'th' king friend intimate,
Who in their bed the hapless lovers took,
And in the tower caus'd each, separate
To be confin'd, both under strictest look :
And I believe, before is spent this day,
That him in pangs and misery they'll slay.

41.

I fled, on purpose to avoid such sight :
Alive they'll burn him: O, what cruelty !
Nothing more grievous could unto me light,
Than to such lovely youth such injury :
Nor e'er shall I enjoy so great delight,
But what will turn to sorrow instantly ;
Whene'er those barb'rous flames I call to mind,
To burn those limbs so fair and delicate design'd.

42.

Bradamant heard and greatly her annoy'd
This news: it ev'n he heart did tear:
It seem'd, this man condemn'd her thoughts employ'd
As much, as if he her own brother were :
And sure her terrors were not wholly void
Of reason, as hereafter you will hear :
Turn'd to Ruggier, said, to me fit it shews,
In this man's favour, we our arms should use.

43.

And to that sad one says: be comforted,
See you, within those walls us to convey ;
For if the young man, as yet, is not dead,
You may be certain, him they shall not slay.
Ruggier, whose heart benignant now was led
By's lady and this merciful essay,
Found in himself inflam'd a strong desire,
Not to permit the young man to expire.

44.

And to the lady, who shed from each eye
Of tears a river, said, why do we stay ?
To help is needful now and not to cry :
To where your friend is, guide us on the way ;
From thousand swords and lances, guaranty
We'll be, to take him, if you don't delay ;
But to your utmost judge the road, lest late
Our aid may prove and he by fire may find his fate.

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45.

The lofty speech and semblance fierce, which bore
 This noble couple of such wond'rous might,
 Had efficacy, to that hope restore
 Thither, from whence it late had ta'en its flight;
 But seeing that, than of the distance, more,
 Their way would be impeded, she had fright,
 And that their journey would in vain be made,
 The lady in herself suspended stay'd.

46.

Then says to them: if we that way set out
 That even goes unto the place foreright,
 We should get there in season, I've no doubt,
 Before the time that they the fire may light;
 But we must pass by such embarrass'd route,
 That scarce a day will be sufficient quite
 To get thro' that: so when arriv'd we are,
 That we shall find the young man dead, I fear.

47.

And why, said Ruggier, should we not resort
 By th' nearest way? The lady then rejoind:
 Because o'th' counts Pontier there lays a fort
 Just in our way, where custom has assign'd,
 Not three days past, of base and evil fort
 To knight and dame for feats of arms inclin'd,
 Pinabell, vilest of all men that live,
 Son of the count Anselm of Altarive.

48.

From thence no cavalier or lady goes;
 But suffer wrong, e're going, and distress:
 Both of their steeds depriv'd and they must lose
 His arms the warrior and the dame her dress.
 No knight the lance to manage better knows,
 Nor manag'd has, in France, years numberless,
 Than four, who oath have taken at that fort,
 That they'll the law of Pinabell support.

49.

How this same custom, of no longer date
 Than three days, first began, I will declare:
 If right or wrong, you'll in your judgment state,
 Th' occasion be, that caus'd those knights to swear.
 Pinabell has a wife inveterate,
 So brutal, she on earth has not her pair:
 She with him, somewhere, travelling one day,
 Met with a knight, who trick on her did play.

50.

The knight, as she did banter on him pass,
 That an old woman did behind him ride,
 Tilted with Pinabell, who skillful was
 Little in prowess, but too much in pride:
 Him he beat down: caus'd her dismount toth' grays,
 And, if she upright walk'd or hobbling, try'd:
 Left her on foot and with her sumptuous vest
 He caus'd the ancient woman to be dress.

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51.

She, who on foot remain'd, now full of spite
 And greedy her revenge to satisfy,
 One that did well with Pinabell unite,
 Who in ill acts would still with her comply,
 Took no repose either by day or night,
 And said she ne'er should more have gayety,
 E're thousand knights and dames on earth be lain,
 And from them were their arms and habits ta'en.

52.

Here came, the self same day, as it fell out,
 Four mighty cavaliers unto their fort,
 Who, from remotest regions round about,
 But lately did unto these parts resort:
 Our age affords not of such valour stout
 So many more good at the warlike sport:
 Aquilant, Sansonett, Grison are three,
 Guidon the savage, quite a youth is he.

53.

Pinabell, with deportment all polite,
 Them, at the fort I nam'd, reception gave;
 But them he seiz'd on in their beds at night,
 And thus seiz'd kept: nor let them freedom have,
 Till, for a year and month, their oaths they plight,
 (That was the term, which he from them did crave)
 That here they'd stay: and of their arms deprive
 Ev'ry knight errant, that should here arrive.

54.

And that the ladies, in their company,
 They will unhorse and send them off undress'd:
 Thus swearing, they're under necessity
 This to observe, tho' grief their hearts molest.
 It seems that, to this time, none able be
 'Gainst these to tilt, but to the earth they're press'd:
 And numbers infinite have hither come,
 Who without arms or horse have travel'd home.

55.

The rule which they observe is: when goes out
 The first by lot, he runs the tilt alone;
 But if he finds his enemy so stout,
 He in his saddle stays, himself cast down,
 The rest compell'd are to conclude the bout,
 Until their deaths, all in conjunction:
 Guess now, if each of them possess such might,
 What they must prove when all of them unite.

56.

Then, 'tis ill suiting of our case the state,
 Which all delays and put off does deny,
 That ye to prove that tournament should wait:
 I'll presuppose, ye gain the victory,
 As your grand semblance seems to intimate;
 But 'tis not thing to be done instantly:
 And I've great doubt, the youth by fire they'll slay,
 If, day entire, to help him we delay.

57.

Ruggier said: to this no regard let's pay:
 By us be all our utmost efforts made:
 O'th' rest let him take care, who heav'n does sway,
 Or fortune, if it be upon her lay'd:
 You, by this tilt, shall manifest survey,
 If we are fitting to give this man aid,
 Who for cause slight and of so small concern,
 As you've related, is this day to burn.

58.

The damsel, without making more reply,
 Sets out her journey by the way most strait:
 More than three miles thereon they did not hie,
 Ere they arriv'd unto the bridge and gate,
 Where the arms lost are and the drapery,
 And ev'n of life much doubtful is the fate:
 When of the castle they in view were got
 The watch twice on the bell the signal smote.

59.

When, lo, in hurry vast from forth the gate,
 An old man came on sorry nag full trot:
 And he advancing hollow'd out, Wait, wait,
 Holla, stand fast; for here you pay your scot:
 And if none did the usage yet relate
 To ye, I'll tell ye, what they here allot:
 And so the custom he began to tell,
 Which instituted was by Pinabell.

60.

And then pursu'd: meaning them to advise,
 As he with other knights was us'd to do:
 Son, let the dame undress herself, he cries,
 And leave with us your arms, the horses too,
 And risque not such a dang'rous enterprise,
 Nor, to oppose four such stout warriors, go.
 Horses, arms, cloaths you'll any where obtain,
 But loss of life can't be repair'd again.

61.

No more, says Ruggier, talk no more; for I
 Am well inform'd of all: and hither tend,
 If I so pow'rful am, myself to try,
 In fact, as in my heart I comprehend:
 To no one I yield up cloaths, arms, palfrey,
 Who does but threats and tokens to me send:
 And I'm most certain too, for words alone,
 My comrade never will resign her own.

62.

But now contrive, them I face instantly,
 Who, arms and horse to take, thought entertain;
 For, o'er yon mountain yet to travel we
 And here can't too long interval remain.
 Th' old man reply'd: there on the bridge now see
 Who comes that to perform: nor spoke in vain;
 For, dress'd in a surtout, came forth a knight,
 Vermilion and with flow'rs embroider'd white.

63.

Bradamant earnest did Ruggier intreat,
 That he w'd, in favour, this attack resign
 Of casting this brave knight from out his seat,
 Who wore the flow'ry vest embroider'd fine:
 But this she could not gain: and it was meet,
 She should do, just as Ruggier should incline:
 He to himself this emprise would reserve,
 And Bradamant should stand all to observe.

64.

Ruggier ask'd the old man, who that might be,
 That first from out the portal issued:
 'Tis Sanfonet, he said: th' embroidery,
 He wears, I know, white flow'rs on vestment red.
 To different sides they move on sev'rally,
 Without a word they eager forward sped
 To meet each other, with their spears bent low,
 Pressing their horses at full speed to go.

65.

In the mean time from out the castle press'd
 With Pinabell of foot a number vast,
 Prompt and adroit of their arms to divest
 The cavaliers, out of their saddles cast.
 To th' meeting the stout knights themselves address'd,
 In the rests holding their huge lances fast,
 Of two palms thickness made of native beech,
 Which taper'd were, from where the ferrules reach.

66.

Of such sort more than ten caus'd them prepare,
 Sever'd from off its verdant stock each one,
 Sanfonet, from a forest bord'ring near,
 And two be brought there, in this tilt to run:
 Shield and cuirass of adamant to wear
 He needs, who hop'd those furious strokes to shun.
 Soon as arriv'd, h'ad caus'd them one present
 To Ruggier, for his own use t'other meant.

67.

With these, which would thro' anvils passage get,
 At points extreme so stout with iron made,
 On either side their shields first steady set,
 Meeting half way, each other they invade.
 That of Ruggier, which caus'd the devils sweat
 In forging, little was of blows afraid:
 That shield I speak of, which prepar'd Atlant,
 On whose strange pow'r to you I did descant.

68.

I told you, that with such amazing might
 Th' enchanting splendour strikes upon the eyes,
 It, when reveal'd, extinguishes all light,
 And man as in fit epileptic lies:
 Therefore, unless necessity invite,
 A vail he constantly upon it lies:
 Impenetrable too it must be thought,
 By such encounter since affected nought.

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69.

69.

The other, by less skillful artist wrought,
 Could not the weight of such vast stroke sustain,
 Suddenly, as if 'twere by thunder smote,
 Admits the steel and gap'd quite cleft in twain :
 Admits the steel, which underneath now fought
 The arm, which had been cover'd o'er in vain :
 So that thence Sanfonet receiv'd a wound,
 And, in disgrace, was from his saddle forc'd to bound.

70.

And this the first was of that company,
 Who there maintain'd that custom insolent,
 Who gain'd not o'er the others victory,
 And in the tilt was from his saddle sent :
 They who now laugh, at other while must cry,
 And sometimes find fortune malevolent.
 He at the fort again th' alarm smites,
 And gave the signal to the other knights.

71.

In the mean time, Pinabel had come nigh
 To Bradamant, who that might be, to know,
 Who, with such skill and with such valour high,
 Gave of his fort the warrior such a blow :
 'Twas heaven's justice, that will'd, properly
 His merits should be paid, now caus'd him go
 Upon the very steed, which heretofore
 He by deceit from Bradamante bore.

72.

Eight months were now exactly at an end,
 Since they upon the road together went,
 This Maganzese (if you in mind attend)
 Her down into the tomb of Merlin sent,
 When from her death the branch did her defend,
 That fell with her, rather good accident :
 And thinking, she must in the cave be dead,
 He got away and with her war-horse fled.

73.

Bradamant knew her horse immediately,
 And by him knew the count, that villain base,
 And when his voice she heard and came more nigh,
 With more attention she gaz'd on his face :
 This is the traitor, says she, certainly,
 Who fought to do me outrage and disgrace :
 Behold, his crime now hither him has led,
 Where he shall have reward, he merited.

74.

She threats, her hand upon her sword does lay,
 Springs tow'rd's him : all was in an instant done :
 But, ere her stroke, she intercepts his way,
 That for the castle he mayn't from her run.
 Pinabel ha'n't t'escape of hope one ray,
 Like fox that steals to den the dogs to shun :
 He crying out, not daring to make head,
 Precipitate into the forest fled.

75.

Pallid, dismay'd, the wretch spurs at swift rate ;
 For, his hope ultimate in flight he found :
 The damsel of Dordone with vengeful hate
 Her steel still at his flank does press and wound,
 Still reaches him, does ne'er behind him wait :
 Vast is the rumour, the wood groans around.
 No news of this yet to the castle went ;
 For all on Ruggier only were intent.

76.

To th' fort belonging t'other warriors three
 Mean time had issu'd forth upon the plain,
 Having that spiteful dame in company,
 Who forc'd them this vile custom to maintain :
 To each of whom death would more grateful be,
 Than life, if blemish'd with dishonour's stain.
 With blush each face, with grief each heart did glow,
 That, to th' attack of one alone, so many go.

77.

The cruel strumpet, who did first contrive
 This custom vile, and caus'd them it maintain,
 The pact and oath does to their minds revive,
 Which they, her inj'ry to avenge, had ta'en.
 If him my single lance to earth can drive,
 Wherefore my comrades help do you ordain ?
 Says Guidon savage : if herein I lye,
 After take off my head, content am I.

78.

So Aquilant and so Grison now said :
 Man against man inclin'd to tilt each one,
 And rather pris'ner ta'en would be or dead,
 Than set out more than one, 'gainst one alone.
 The woman said to them : wherefore is made
 Such an harangue, where no effect is shown !
 I brought ye here of arms him to deprive,
 Not statutes new, new compacts to contrive.

79.

When you I had in prison, suitably
 You'd these excuses made, now 'tis too late :
 You with the rule establish'd must comply,
 Not with vain speeches thus prevaricate.
 Ruggier cry'd out to them : the arms here see,
 The horse with saddle new and bit compleat,
 The vestments of the lady see here too,
 If ye will have them, why more tarry you ?

80.

She of the fort, this side, does them torment,
 On that, Ruggier sarcastic did exclaim,
 So that, per force, out they together went ;
 But blazing all their visages, thro' shame :
 Foremost appear'd they two, who their descent
 From the grand marquis of Burgognia claim ;
 But Guidon, who rode on more heavy steed,
 Behind, at a small distance, did proceed.

81.

With the same lance, with which he had beat down!
 Brave Sanfonet, Ruggier did forward bear,
 Cover'd o'er with that shield of such renown,
 Atlant on th' Pyrenean hills did wear:
 I speak of that enchanted, which so shone,
 The human sight could not support its glare,
 To which Ruggier, for succour ultimate,
 Still had recurr'd, in dangers the most great.

82.

Altho' but three times it did needful prove,
 And sure in peril grand, to use that light:
 The first two were, what time he did remove,
 From those soft realms, to customs more upright:
 The third, when, at the foaming sea, he drove
 The orc, depriv'd of his delicious bite,
 Who to devour the naked maid did gape,
 That after from him made so cruel an escape.

83.

Save those three times, he it continually
 Conceal'd beneath a veil such way did hold,
 He able was, when needful, readily
 It still, for his assistance, to unfold:
 With this he there advanc'd, the tilt to try,
 As I before have said, in mind so bold,
 That o'th' three knights, who coming he survey'd,
 Than little infants, he was less afraid.

84.

Ruggier at Grifon aim'd just where does join
 The summit of the shield up to the sight,
 And he of falling on all sides gave sign:
 At last fell: and far off his horse did light.
 Grifon his lance did to his shield incline;
 But it askance went not directed right,
 When polish'd finding it and smooth as glass,
 Whizzing it slid and did effectless pass.

85.

It tore to bits the veil, for cov'ring thrown
 Over the direful and enchanted light,
 At whose vast splendor all must tumble down,
 There's no escape, divested of their sight.
 Aquilant, who a breast with him came on,
 Tore the veil too and left it naked quite:
 The splendor struck on the two brother's eyes,
 And Guidon's, who to keep pace with them tries.

86.

This side and that all tumble to the ground,
 The shield not only dazzles ev'ry sight;
 But of them all the senses does astound.
 Ruggier, who knows not, ended is the fight,
 Draws forth his sword, turning his steed around,
 That sword that with so certain wound does smite;
 But, to oppose him, no one he espies;
 For each to earth struck by that lustre lies.

87.

The knights and those who in a company
 On foot went out, the ladies with the rest,
 The steeds too he in such guise did descry,
 All seem'd as dying, heaving so each chest:
 First he amaz'd was; but then did espy,
 At his left side, the tatter'd veil deprest:
 That veil of silk I say, which to prevent
 The light he us'd, now guilty of this accident.

88.

Sudden he turns and round his eyes inclin'd
 His warriores belov'd to espy,
 And thither came where her he left behind,
 What time they the first tilt began to try:
 Thinks, she is gone, since her he cannot find,
 To interpose, the young man should not dye:
 Perhaps, thro' doubt, they him by fire might slay,
 During the time the tilt caus'd such delay.

89.

He sees the lady, 'mongst the rest cast down,
 That lady, who to this place him did guide:
 Puts her before him, as if in a swoon,
 And wholly in confusion off does ride:
 Then with a mantle, which she o'er her gown
 Was dress'd in, the enchanted shield did hide,
 And to her soon her senses does restore,
 As he the noxious blaze had cover'd o'er.

90.

Off went Ruggier, with visage crimson dy'd,
 Which he, thro' shame, did not e'en dare to raise:
 It seem'd to him that ev'ry one would chide
 A victory deserving little praise:
 What amends can I make, whence I may hide
 Crime, which too heavy on my honour lays?
 For that, the conquest, which I've gain'd, they'll cry,
 Was by enchantment done, not my own bravery.

91.

Whilst he went on, but in his thoughts did stray,
 On what h'ad search'd so much, by chance he fell;
 For he arriv'd i'th' middle of his way,
 Where was dug out of depth profound a well:
 The cattle here, in heat of sultry day,
 Retire, when with the cud their gullets swell.
 Said Ruggier: to provide, here's suiting place,
 That, shield, thou never cause me more disgrace.

92.

Tarry no more with me: and here may end
 That blame, i'th' world did having you create.
 Thus speaking, on the road he does descend,
 Takes stone immense and of prodigious weight,
 And ties it to the shield: then both he sent
 To try if of the well the depth was great:
 And said: there, bury'd at the bottom lie,
 And with thee ever may be hid my infamy.

93.

Deep was the well, with water quite replete,
Heavy the shield and heavy was the stone,
They stop'd not, till they did to bottom get,
The light, soft liquid sudden clos'd thereon :
Fame, on the splendor of this noble feat,
Not silent was ; but joy'd to make it known,
And, with the rumour, caus'd her trumpet sound
Thro' France, thro' Spain and all the provinces around.

94.

Soon as thro' various voices did transpire
Th' adventure strange and o'er the world did fly,
It many warriors set about t'enquire,
As well from parts remote at those more nigh ;
But, of the forest knowledge none acquire,
Where in the well the sacred shield did lie ;
For that the dame, who did the action tell,
Ne'er would reveal the country or the well.

95.

When from the castle oft Ruggier was gone,
Where he had conquer'd in so small a fight ;
For Pinabel's four warriors of renown
He caus'd remain like men of straw so light,
Taking the shield, h'ad ta'en that blaze that shone,
And dazzled all their souls as well as fight :
And they, who like dead men on earth were lain,
Full of amazement were got up again.

96.

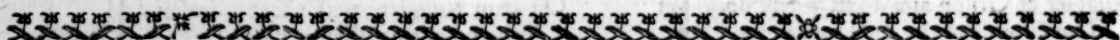
Nor upon other subject, that whole day,
But this strange accident, a word they said,
And how it happen'd, each in such a way
By that light horrible was vanquished :
While this they talk'd of, some one did convey
News, that inform'd them Pinabel was dead :
That Pinabel was dead to them was shown ;
But who had kill'd him was as yet unknown.

97.

In the mean time, Bradamant undismay'd
At narrow pass to Pinabel had press'd :
An hundred times in him had thrust her blade
Up to the middle, thro' his flanks and breast :
Now, this pollution from the world convey'd,
Which all the country round did so infest,
She turns her shoulders on the conscious place,
With the same steed, once stole that villain base.

98.

She would have turn'd back by the road she went
From Ruggier ; but ne'er could find out the way :
Now thro' the vales, now o'er the hills she bent,
Almost thro' all that country she did stray ;
But cruel fortune never would consent,
She should, where Ruggier's gone, herself convey.
Stay, till next Canto to you I recite,
If from my story you receive delight.



C A N T O XXV.

1.

WHAT vast contention is in youthful mind,
'Twixt wish'd for praise & vi'lent force of love!
Which is most pow'ful, we scarce truly find :
Now one, now t'other does superior prove.
Here both these cavaliers became inclin'd,
(Their duty, honour with such force did move)
Their am'rous strife should now aside be lay'd,
Till they afforded to the camp their aid.

2.

But here love did the greater pow'r maintain ;
For had the lady not such way ordain'd,
They would not now this conflict fierce refrain,
Till the triumphal laurel one had gain'd :
And Agramante, with his troops, in vain,
Expecting their assistance, had remain'd ;
Therefore, love is not always harmful sound,
If it oft hurts, it does sometimes to good redound.

3.

The Pagan knights who both did now consent,
This their dissention wholly to postpone,
Till to the Afric army aid they lent,
Tow'rd's Paris with the lady fair went on :
Along with them the little dwarf too went.
Who had to find the Tartar's footsteps gone,
Till he conducted, where he front to front
Might meet with him, the jealous Rodomont.

4.

They to a mead arriv'd, where in delight
Were seated cavaliers upon a brook,
Two were disarm'd, two wore their helmets bright,
A lady with them of a beauteous look.
Who these may be, I will elsewhere recite :
Not now ; for of Ruggier must first be spoke,
Of good Ruggier, of whom I late did tell,
How he the shield had cast into the well.

5.

5.

Not yet a mile he from the well had gone,
 Ere he a courier saw who tow'rd's him press'd,
 One of th' expresses sent by Trojan's son,
 Unto those knights, whose aid he did request:
 From him he heard, to dang'rous station
 Charles had the pagan army so distress'd,
 That if some of them did not help him soon,
 His honour there and life he must lay down.

6.

By num'rous thoughts Ruggier's reduc'd to doubt,
 Which all did, all at once, his mind divide;
 But which of them, as best, to choose he ought,
 With time and place for thought he's ill supply'd:
 Th' express he lets go on: and turn'd about
 Whither the lady him dispos'd to guide,
 Who him incessant hurry'd so away,
 No interval she gave him for delay.

7.

Thence, keeping on their purpos'd road, he got
 Unto a city, just at setting sun:
 Marsilius, midst of France, now held this spot,
 As in this war he it from Charles had won:
 Either at bridge or gate he halted not,
 As pass or entrance there deny'd him none:
 Tho', at the foss and all around the gate,
 Arm'd men in numbers vast as guards did wait.

8.

For that by all the people was well known
 The damsel, whom he had in company,
 Freely he was permitted to pass on,
 Nor ev'n enquir'd they of him, whence came he:
 Comes to the piazza, where the fire now shone,
 And crouds of cruel people there does see,
 When in the center fix'd he does descry
 With ghastly look the youth, who stands condemn'd
 to dye.

9.

Ruggier, when on his face he rais'd his eyes,
 Which, as he weeping stood, to earth was bent,
 Conceiv'd in mind, he Bradamant espies,
 So much the youth her form did represent:
 More her he seems, as he more fix'd applies
 His sight on face and person most intent:
 Says to himself: sure Bradamant I see,
 Or I'm not that Ruggier I us'd to be!

10.

By too much courage haply she might move,
 O'th' youth condemn'd for the defence inclin'd,
 And, as the case did unsuccessful prove,
 Might be a pris'ner ta'en (as here I find.)
 Ah! why did she so haste? I might have strove
 With her my pow'r at th' emprise to have join'd;
 But heav'n be prais'd! that here has me convey'd,
 In time sufficient yet to give her aid.

11.

And with no more delay his sword he drew,
 As at the other fort his spear he broke,
 And with his steed on the weak vulgar flew,
 Thro' breast, thro' flank, thro' paunch each dif-
 f'rent stroke.
 He wheel'd his sword around and there did hew
 On foreheads, there throats, cheeks he took:
 In crouds immense the people screaming fled,
 Some maim'd in limb, some wounded in the head.

12.

As flock of birds on border of some lake
 Securely fly and for their pasture watch,
 If from the sky the greedy falcon make
 Amongst them and does one beat down or catch,
 They spread in flight, each does his mate forsake,
 Intent alone his own 'scape to dispatch:
 In such a manner one might see them do,
 Soon as the brave Ruggier amongst them flew.

13.

Of five or six, clean off their shoulders, bore
 Ruggier the heads, who were too slow in flight:
 He chopt, quit to their breasts, as many more,
 To teeth and eyes, a number infinite.
 I will admit, that they no helmets wore;
 But they'd enough of steely circlets bright:
 And if they had worn helmets the most rare,
 Such sort of wounds had fallen to their share.

14.

The force of Ruggier was not so minute,
 As that which in our modern knights is shown,
 In bear or lion or in other brute
 Most fierce, of foreign country or our own:
 Earthquake as parallel might haply suit,
 Or the great devil, not th' infernal one;
 But your fam'd one, my lord, that bursts with fire,
 Which to its force makes earth, sea, heav'n retire.

15.

From ev'ry stroke, but seldom fell so few
 As one to earth, most commonly a pair:
 Four at one blow, nay even five he slew,
 That soon a hundred they in number were:
 The weapon cut, which from his side he drew,
 As 'twere soft tin, the steel of proof most rare:
 Falerine, in Orgagna's garden, made,
 Orlando to destroy, that cruel blade.

16.

Then, that she made it, sorely did repent,
 As she her garden saw destroy'd thereby:
 What mischief must it do, what detriment,
 In hand of warrior of such bravery!
 If Ruggier e'er had rage, strength violent,
 If e'er exerted was his valour high,
 Here 'twas he us'd it, here he it display'd,
 Most earnest here to give his lady aid.

17.

As 'gainst the running hounds the tim'rous hare,
 Such defence 'gainst him made this company :
 The slaughter'd now remaining num'rous were,
 And numbers infinite for safety fly.
 Mean while the lady off the bonds did tear,
 Which both the hands of the young man did tye,
 And to him, what she could, she arms convey'd,
 Shield o'er his neck and to his hand a blade.

18.

He much provok'd exerts all force he could,
 Himself t'avenge of this folk's cruelty,
 And here he instance of his prowess shew'd
 And signaliz'd himself for bravery.
 The sun his golden wheels now had bedew'd
 To quench his radiant beams i'th' western sea,
 What time Ruggier victorious did resort,
 Along with the young man, from out the fort.

19.

The youth, now loss of life he did evade,
 When going with Ruggier from forth the gate,
 In number infinite thanks to him paid,
 In prudent words and manner delicate :
 For that, not knowing him, to give him aid,
 He ran the risk of meeting his own fate :
 And beg'd him tell his name, that he might know,
 Whom he so highly was beholden to.

20.

I see, said Ruggier, sure ! the lovely face !
 The semblance bright, the features fine appear !
 But the sweet tone, that does the diction grace
 Of my dear Bradamant, I do not hear !
 Nor are those thanks, she gives me in this case,
 What she should use to lover so sincere :
 But if 'tis Bradamant, how can it be,
 My name so soon escapes her memory ?

21.

To be inform'd for certain, artfully
 Ruggier said to him, I've seen you elsewhere :
 And I've reflected much, but finally
 Don't know the place, nor to my thought can clear.
 Pray, tell me this, if in your memory :
 And I could wish, your name you would declare,
 That I may know, whom I assistance gave,
 And from the fire his life to day did save.

22.

It likely may be, you've seen me before,
 He said : but where by me can't be exprest ;
 For I the world, for my part, wander o'er,
 Having adventure, here and there in quest.
 Haply my sister 'twas, who girded wore
 Sword at her side, and was in armour drest :
 W're twins, and she so much resembles me,
 We by our kindred can't distinguish'd be.

23.

Nor first or second or yet fourth you are,
 Of those, who this mistake have fall'n into :
 Nor sire or brothers or she who did bear
 Us at a birth, can any difference know :
 'Tis true, my locks cut short and thin I wear,
 As other men accustom'd are to do ;
 She her's long, 'bout her head in tresses wound,
 From whence betwixt us much distinction's found.

24.

But, since she one day did a wound sustain
 In her head (how too long is to declare)
 And devout pilgrim, her to render sane,
 Cut off her locks, to th' middle of her ear,
 No mark betwixt us longer did remain
 Of difference, save, sex and names we bear :
 I Ricciardet, she Bradamant is call'd,
 I brother am, she's sister, of Rinald.

25.

And, if to hear it would not irksome be,
 I'll tell you case, for your astonishment,
 Which, from resembling her, fell out to me :
 Joy 'twas at first, i'th' end did much torment.
 Ruggier, who no more grateful history
 Could hear, or theme, that him cou'd more content,
 Than what promoted calling to his mind
 His lady dear, intreated so, that he subjoin'd :

26.

One day it happen'd, as a wood hard by,
 My sister in her walk was trav'ling o'er,
 She wounded was by pagan company :
 (For on her road no helmet then she wore)
 To cut off her long hair she must comply,
 If the sad wound she would to health restore,
 Which in her head she had in dang'rous way.
 And so she shorn does thro' the forest stray.

27.

Wand'ring she came to fountain in the shade,
 And as she weary was and suffer'd pain,
 Dismounts her horse and then disarms her head,
 And slept now on the tender herbage lain.
 I don't believe, you novel e'er did read,
 Which, than this story, more could entertain.
 The Spanish Flordispine came to this place,
 As in the wood she now persu'd the chace.

28.

And soon as there my sister she espy'd,
 Except her visage, arm'd in ev'ry part,
 Who, 'stead of distaff, sword wore at her side,
 That, knight she saw her fancy did impart :
 Those manly features and sweet face she ey'd
 So much, that vanquish'd she perceiv'd her heart :
 Her tow'rs the shades to th' chace she does invite,
 That she might hide herself, at last, from other's sight.

29.

29.

Soon as got with her to a place retir'd,
Where sh'ad no fear, that any her would find,
With acts and words she by degrees aspir'd,
To show the grievous torments of her mind:
With burning sighs and eyes with passion fir'd,
Her soul reveal'd, that with desire she pin'd:
Now pale her visage, now inflam'd her look,
So far she ventur'd that a kiss she took.

30.

From hence my sister was most certain made,
The lady her for other sex had ta'en:
Nor to her could she give the needful aid,
And under difficulty great she's lain.
'Tis better, I refuse, in thought, she said,
What she conceives of me, this credence vain,
And that myself I courteous woman show,
Than suffer, I for worthless fellow go.

31.

And spoke the truth; for meaness 'twere express,
Suiting a plaister figure made for show,
When lady should herself to man address,
Whose converse does with sweets nectareous flow,
That he should prating stand, quite motionless,
And cuckow like his pinions dropping low.
In prudent manner she her speech convey'd,
When she inform'd her, that she was a maid.

32.

Who, glory, as Camilla heretofore,
Seek for in arms: in Afric' born was I,
Ith' city of Arzill, on the sea shore,
And shield and lance us'd from my infancy.
For this, no spark extinguish'd was the more
Of the enamour'd lady's passion high:
This remedy to her deep wound prov'd slow,
Love in her heart his arrow shot so low.

33.

For this, her face appears in charms no less,
Her looks less fair, her manners less polite:
For this, she her lost heart don't repossess,
Which in those eyes beloved took delight.
She thinks, on seeing her in such a dress,
She able is her passion to requite;
But, when, that 'tis a woman, she perceives,
Her sighs and complaints show, she immensely grieves.

34.

Whoe'er her grief and pangs had heard that day,
Could not but with her lamentations join:
What torments e'er so cruel were, she'd say,
Than which are not more cruel these of mine!
Of ev'ry love, in good or evil way,
I might have hop'd to accomplish my design:
The rose I from the thorns could separate,
My wish no sweets can crop---inordinate!

35.

If, love, dispos'd you were me to torment,
As you my happy state did not approve,
You with such sufferings should have been content,
As other lovers have been us'd to prove.
'Mongst human kind or brutes, such accident
Ne'er was, that female should the female love:
Woman to woman lovely don't appear,
She lamb to she, nor to the doe the female deer.

36.

In earth, in air, in sea, 'tis I alone,
Who so severe an instance undergo:
And this you, in your sovereignty, have done,
That sample strange my error you might show.
The consort of king Ninus, for her son,
With wicked and incestuous flame did glow:
Myrrha her fire: a bull the Cretan lov'd;
But, than all theirs, my wish has weaker prov'd.

37.

Those women on the males form'd their design,
Hop'd for their ends, and had them, as they say:
The wooden cow Phasiphae enter'd in:
Others by various means and different way;
But all his skill should Dædalus combine,
He could not loose those bonds which on me lay,
Which are by master fram'd too diligent,
Nature, than all things far more prevalent.

38.

Weeping and wasting thus lamented sore
The lovely maid, nor could have peaceful thought:
Sometimes her face, sometimes her locks she tore,
And, 'gainst herself, herself she vengeance sought.
My sister, thro' compassion, did deplore,
To hear her complaints, still to compulsion brought,
Her weak and vain desire try'd to remove;
But all she spoke did to no purpose prove.

39.

She, who did help and not advice require,
Still more laments her fate in doleful way.
To a short term began day to expire;
The west was red by the sun's setting ray:
The hour was suiting all should home retire,
Who meant not in the wood all night to stay,
To Brad'mant when the lady did apply,
To go to this her city at a distance nigh.

40.

My sister no means to refuse her knew,
And so they to the place together went,
Where me had cast that horrid, wicked crew
Unto the flames, did not your aid prevent.
Fair Floridispine here did her utmost do,
That they my sister highly compliment:
And again dressing her in female gown,
That she a lady was, to all made known.

D

41.

Consid'ring well, no sort of benefit,
 From that appearance manly, she could gain,
 It seem'd not therefore in her judgment fit,
 For that, should any blame be on her lain :
 And did it too, that th' ill, which on her lit,
 By a male habit, thro' her fancy vain,
 She, by the truth revealing, would contrive,
 Now, by another, from her mind to drive.

42.

Together, to one bed, at night, they went ;
 But very different was their repose :
 One slept, and t'other griev'd and did lament
 And more still with her ardent passion glows,
 And her short rest some image does invent,
 If sometimes sleep her weary'd eyelids close :
 She seems to see, that fate, her wish to grant,
 To better sex converted Bradamant.

43.

As the sick man with feverish thirst oppress'd,
 If, in such greedy wish, asleep he fall,
 In his confus'd and interrupted rest,
 Each sort of liquor he to mind does call :
 Just so, to make her am'rous wishes blest,
 Sleep to her represents in fancy all :
 She wakes and restless tumbles up and down,
 Perceiving her fantastick vision's flown.

44.

How many pray'rs, how many vows, that night,
 To Macon, and to all the gods she pay'd !
 That, by some wonder clear to human sight,
 Of her, to better sex, change might be made :
 But, all, she saw, turn'd out effectless quite,
 And heav'n perhaps in laughter her survey'd.
 The night was pass'd, and Phoebus his bright face
 Drew from the sea, and with his light the world did
 grace.

45.

When day arriv'd, and they their bed forsake,
 The grief of Flordispine did still augment ;
 For Bradamant had said, her leave she'd take,
 Willing to get from this embarrassment.
 The courteous lady steed of finest make,
 At parting, caus'd her take, which she'd present,
 Adorn'd with gold : and upper vestment grand,
 Richly embroider'd o'er with her own hand.

46.

With her some distance Flordispine did go :
 Then to her mansion moaning took her way.
 My sister on her journey hurry'd so,
 She came to Montalban that very day :
 We brothers and my mother sunk in woe,
 Joyfully round her croud in sportive play ;
 For, as of her we late no news did hear,
 All had strong doubt and we her death did fear.

47.

Her helmet off, we gaz'd on her short hair
 Which formerly about her head was rowl'd :
 The foreign upper vest too, she did wear,
 Caus'd us with vast amazement her behold :
 And she did all from first to last declare,
 The subject, which to you I just have told,
 How, in a forest, she was sorely smit,
 And did, her locks, for cure, to be cut off,
 permit.

48.

And how, asleep on fountain's border lain,
 The lovely huntress coming on her lit,
 Whom gave delight such semblance so mista'en,
 And how she then the company did quit :
 Then fully told how t'other did complain,
 So that our hearts were with compassion smit ;
 And how she with her lodg'd, and did explain
 All acts sh'ad done, till she came home again.

49.

Of Flordispine the person I well knew,
 In France and Saragossa her I'd seen,
 And to my fancy did most pleasing shew
 Her charming eyes, her lovely air and mien ;
 But, I would not upon her fix my view,
 For hopeless love is idle tale, I ween :
 Now, when was proffer'd such an ample field,
 Sudden, I to my former passion yield.

50.

From this expectance, Love began the knot ;
 For he could not have work'd with other thread,
 And shew'd the means (whence I was also caught)
 That the so wish'd for lady I might wed :
 And to succeed easy might be the plot,
 That as oftimes others had been misled
 By likeness, which I to my sister shew,
 I haply might deceive this damsel too.

51.

I stood in doubt : at last, I thought it right,
 To seek what pleasures us should still be try'd :
 Of this my thought I let none in the light,
 Nor would in any one's advice confide :
 Where were those arms, I went that very night,
 Which by my sister late were lay'd aside :
 Got them : and with her steed my road I take,
 Nor would I even wait till the day-break.

52.

I travel'd on by night, Love led the way,
 That I the lovely Flordispine might meet :
 And I arriv'd there ere the sun's bright ray
 As yet i'th' ocean did himself secrete :
 Happy is he, who running can convey
 Himself, of others first, the queen to greet,
 Hoping of her to merit the regard,
 For this good news and gain no small reward.

53.

All of them in the same mistake agreed,
Thinking 'm Brademant, as you did to-day:
The more, as I had the same dress and speed,
With which the day before she went away:
To me came Flordispine with utmost speed,
So much caref'd me, did such joy display,
And with such sprightly look and chearful mien,
Greater delight could not on earth be seen.

54.

Her lovely arms then round my neck she cast,
Sweetly embrac'd me with a kind salute:
You may believe, Love then his arrow pass'd,
And thro' the middle of my heart did shoot:
Took me by th' hand, and to her room in haste
Led me: and thought it did none other suit,
That my spurs, armour, helmet be unty'd,
And lets none but herself herein be occupy'd.

55.

Then caus'd them bring her own rich, pompous vest,
And it with her own hand she would unfold:
And, as if I were female, me she dress'd,
Then bound my hair with a network of gold.
In manner decent I my eyes address'd,
Nor any act, but that I'm woman, told:
My voice, which possibly might me accuse,
None can discover, it so well I use.

56.

Then we went out, where was much company
Of knights and ladies, in the grand salon,
By whom we were receiv'd with dignity,
Such as to queens and the nobles is shewn.
I laugh'd in mind at many frequently,
Thinking, to them I wholly was unknown;
For, to the wearer merriment supplies
The fancy new, in innocent disguise.

57.

As now the hour of midnight became late,
And some time since the table they did clear,
The table, which with nicest sorts of meat,
Just as the season serv'd, they did prepare,
The lady, till my asking, does not wait,
For that, which was my cause of coming there:
She, in her courtesy, does me invite,
That I'd accept a bed with her that night.

58.

Soon as the ladies and the maids retire,
And chamberlains and pages went away,
We two divested us of our attire,
By blazing flambeaus, which appear'd as day:
I began, Lady, do not now admire,
That I return, after so short a stay;
For, you might haply fancy entertain,
That heav'n knows when you me might see again.

59.

I'll tell the cause, first, why I went away;
Then you, why I came back, shall also hear,
If you, my lady, will with patience stay,
And so prolix a narrative can bear:
In life or death your orders I'd obey,
Nor quit, one hour, the place in which you are;
But, as my presence so hurt your repose,
As the best method I could take, I absence chose.

60.

From out my road me fortune chanc'd to take
Of a wood intricate 'midst leafy glade,
Where noise I heard resound i'th' neighb'ring brake,
As 'twere a lady, that cry'd out for aid:
I thither rush'd, and, on a chrystal lake,
Lit on a fawn, whose hook his prey had made
Of naked nymph, who 'midst the waves did strive,
Whilst cruel he would eat her up alive.

61.

Thither I hurry'd: and my sword I drew;
For other way I could not help supply:
Strait the detested fisherman I slew,
And she into the stream leapt instantly:
You not in vain to my assistance flew,
She said: and I'll reward you gloriously,
As I'm a nymph, with whatsoe'er you crave:
My dwelling is within this chrystal wave.

62.

And I have pow'r stupendous things to do,
Make nature and the elements comply:
Ask to the utmost that my force can go,
Then, leave to me your wish to satisfy;
My song from heaven can the moon bring low,
Make the fire freeze and the air durify;
And sometimes I have, by my word alone,
Caus'd the earth move and steady made the sun.

63.

At this her offer, I did not require
Treasures or lands or over subjects sway,
Nor more in strength and courage to aspire,
Or in the war to bear the palm away;
But only, some how, that what you desire,
And your commands I ever might obey:
Nor did I one thing more, than other ask;
But to her fancy wholly left the task.

64.

This application scarcely had made I,
When her plung'd in the waves again I view:
Nor to my speech subjoin'd she more reply,
But the enchanted water tow'ards me threw,
Which soon as e'er it to my face came nigh,
I was quite chang'd; but how by no means knew:
The act so marvellous scarce true I thought,
To male, from female, I was sudden brought.

D 2

65.

65.

Such wonder strange I to her did relate,
 Till time approach'd to take our sweet repose :
 And said, as you're inform'd now of my state,
 I hope, you in my favour will dispose,
 Since, above riches, honour, pompous state,
 Your service, above all the world, I chose :
 Whenever glory calls, you me will find
 Faithful attendant on your virtuous mind.

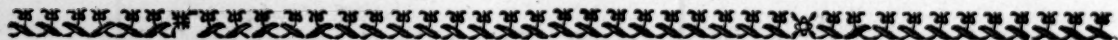
66.

As to him happens, who's of hope devoid
 Of thing, on which he long has been intent,
 Who, while he moans what's lost still unenjoy'd,
 With grief and rage himself does more torment,

Tho' it he finds at last, he's so annoy'd
 By thought of so much labour vainly spent,
 And his despair him to such way has brought,
 He can't believe his sight, & stands confus'd in thought.

67.

The lady so, with vast astonishment,
 Heard the whole story, which I did relate ;
 But even to her ears no credence lent,
 So long accusom'd to bemoan her fate :
 In fit reserve remain'd the innocent,
 'Twixt sleep and waking in a doubtful state :
 Then said, grant heav'n, if sleep such dreams can feign,
 I ne'er may wake, but dreaming still remain.



C A N T O XXVI.

1.

IN ancient days, such courteous ladies were,
 As virtue held, than wealth, at higher rate :
 In this our age, we meet with them but rare,
 Who aught, than profit, dearer estimate ;
 But those, who, from hearts worthy and sincere,
 Forbear of avarice's track the beat,
 Are worthy, living, of felicity ;
 When dead, immortal, glorious to be.

2.

Bradamant to eternal praise had right,
 Who not to wealth or empire was inclin'd :
 But to Ruggier's deportment brave, polite,
 But to the virtues of his noble mind :
 And she deserv'd, of such a valiant knight,
 The object of his love herself to find :
 And, to obtain her, he such feats should do,
 As after ages shall, for wonders, view.

3.

Ruggier, as I did heretofore relate,
 With the two knights of Claremont did arrive,
 I mean with Aldigier and Ricciardet,
 To their two brothers, captives, aid to give :
 I also said, that with a mien elate,
 They coming tow'rs them did a knight perceive,
 Who bore that bird, itself does renovate,
 And ever lives on earth without a mate.

4.

Soon as the knight these people did espy,
 Who stood as if they were prepar'd to smite,
 He was dispos'd to set himself to try,
 If their brave hearts equal'd their semblance bright :
 And said to them, one of ye casually
 Would prove, of us which has superiour might,
 By sword or lance's well directed blows,
 Till one sits fast, to earth the other goes.

5.

That readily, said Aldigier, I'd do,
 Whether you'd wield the sword or run the spear ;
 But with another feat, which you may view,
 If you'll but stay, we so should interfere :
 For I've scarce time to hold discourse with you,
 Much less to break off, for the tilt's career :
 Here, for six hundred men or more, we stay,
 With whom we must a trial have to-day.

6.

To seize two of our friends, whom here they lead
 Their pris'ners, love and pity did excite :
 And so, to tell the cause, he did proceed,
 That made them thus appear in armour bright.
 So fitting the excuse is which you plead,
 The warrior said, I can't but judge it right :
 And I am well persuaded, that ye are
 Three cavaliers, that have but few your pair.

7.

7.

I ask'd you with a stroke or two to meet,
 To try what of your prowess was th' extent;
 But since, ye will, at other's cost I see't,
 Let that suffice: I ask no tournament:
 That, with your arms, this shield, I you intreat,
 And helmet may join in th' experiment:
 And hope to show, when we conjoin'd shall try,
 I undeserving am not of such company.

8.

I think, some will, to know, desirous be,
 The person's name who join'd them at this place,
 And offer'd to Ruggier and company
 To be confed'rate in this dang'rous case:
 She (for she shall be call'd no longer he)
 Marphisa was, who of the woman base
 To wretched Zerbin gave the management,
 The old Gabrine on ev'ry ill intent.

9.

Both the knights of Claremont and Ruggier stout
 Took her, well pleas'd, of their society,
 As, that she was a knight, they certain thought,
 And not a damsel, as was truly she.
 Soon after, Aldigier saw, by look out,
 A banner, which he caus'd his friends to see,
 Which flutter'd beaten by the trembling air,
 Round which a croud of people gather'd were.

10.

And, after, when they nearer to them drew,
 When plainer they perceiv'd the Moorish drefs,
 That they were Saracins, they fully knew,
 And saw the prisoners amidst the pres,
 On sorry keffals brought, in bondage too,
 For gold to barter with the Maganzes:
 Marphise said to them: now, why do we wait,
 Since they are come, and not commence the treat?

11.

Ruggier reply'd: the guests invited all
 Are not yet come: there wants a num'rous part:
 And now we're to prepare a splendid ball,
 To make it solemn, let's use all our art;
 They'll now delay but a short interval:
 In such way speaking, they perceiv'd apart
 The treach'rous crew of Maganzes advance,
 So that they're ready to begin the dance.

12.

The Maganzes, on one side, onwards bent,
 And with them led their mules, beneath the weight
 Of gold, of cloths and rich accoutrement:
 On t'other, coming on, in captive state,
 'Twixt spears, swords, bows, the brothers both lament,
 As to these bound'ries brought to meet their fate:
 And Bertolage their foe inveterate,
 They, with the Moorish captain, hear expostulate.

13.

The son of Amon nor yet Aldigier,
 Seeing the Maganzes, delay could brook:
 Each in the rest fix'd steadily his spear,
 And one and t'other the base traitor struck:
 One pierc'd quite thro' his paunch and saddle-geer,
 And t'other thro' both cheeks his visage took.
 May all ungrateful rascals undergo
 What Bertolage sustain'd from either blow!

14.

Marphisa, at this signal, does advance,
 With Ruggier, nor waits any trumpet's blast:
 Nor did, to break her spear well-settled, chance,
 Till three, successive, she to earth did cast.
 The Pagan worthy was of Ruggier's lance;
 Who led the rest, and out of life did haste:
 And with him, by the self-same instrument,
 Two others to the realms of darkness went.

15.

Hence those assaulted a mistake conceiv'd,
 Which in the end for their destruction made:
 As, on one side, the Maganzes believ'd,
 That by the Pagan troops they were betray'd:
 The Moors, on t'other, by such wounds aggriev'd,
 As vile Assassins t'other tribe upbraid:
 So, 'twixt them they began a slaughter fierce,
 To shoot with bows, with lance and sword to pierce.

16.

Now against one, now t'other troop does bound,
 Ruggier and ten or twenty off he cut:
 As many by the dame with bleeding wound
 Lay here and there, whom she to death had put:
 As many dead cast from their seats to ground,
 As barely touch'd were by their blades acute,
 To which the coats of mail and helmets ply,
 As, in the copse, to th' flames the brush-wood dry.

17.

If e'er t'have seen in your remembrance be,
 Or story might it to your ears relate,
 How, when in discord is the colony
 And into air the bees to fight retreat,
 The greedy swallow will amongst them flee,
 And multitudes does spoil, destroy and eat:
 In such way to your mind you may describe,
 Marphise and Ruggier acted tow'rds this hapless tribe.

18.

Ricciardet and his kinsman did not, so,
 'Twixt the two troops, their dance diversify;
 For they the Pagan forces still forego,
 And to those of Maganza kept their eye:
 The brother of the knight Rinald did show
 With mighty prowess mighty bravery,
 And to be both redoubled caus'd his hate
 He had 'gainst the Maganzes most inveterate.

19.

The self-same reason made himself display
Like lion furious Buovo's bastard son,
Who, with his sword, without rest or delay,
To bits, as egg, hew'd ev'ry helmet down:
And who could help, hardy to show, that day,
Or of new Hector prove the paragon,
Marphise and Ruggier in their company,
The choice and flower of warlike bravery?

20.

Marphise, while she persisted in the fight,
Oft to her comrades turn'd about her eyes,
And, each one's force, comparative, in fight,
Of all she prais'd the prowess with surprize;
But, of Ruggier first was the wond'rous might,
Matchless by the whole world, she this descrys:
And, sometimes, that 'twas Mars himself she thought,
From the fifth heav'n descended to this spot.

21.

Those dreadful strokes she strictly did regard,
That they ne'er fell in vain she clear survey'd:
It seem'd, when 'twas oppos'd to Balisard,
The steel was soft, as if of paper made:
It cut cuirass and helmet the most hard,
Men cleft in two, quite to their horses lay'd,
Then to the field sent down, on either side,
The parts, which it did equally divide.

22.

Repeating still it's formidable shock,
The masters and their very steeds it flew:
The heads in numbers from their shoulders took,
And from the waist the bustos chops in two:
Oft, five or more it cuts off at a stroke,
And, if I doubted not, than of what's true
It more the semblance would of falsehood bear,
I would say more; but I must less declare.

23.

Good Turpin, who knows, truth he does declare,
And leaves to all their thoughts in their own way,
Of Ruggier tells us circumstances rare,
Which when you heard, that they're untruths
you'd say.
So ev'ry warrior did like ice appear
Against Marphise, she torches burning ray:
And she no less the eyes of Ruggier drew
To her, than she of him did the high valour view.

24.

And if she him as the god Mars did view,
He her Bellona might have judg'd to be,
If, that she was a female, he but knew,
As now her person seem'd the contrary:
And haply emulation 'twixt them grew,
Towards this evil, wretched, company,
Upon whose flesh and blood and nerves and bones
Each trial makes which greater prowess owns.

4

25.

Of four suffic'd the courage rare and might,
To drive both camps to 'scape precipitate:
No better arms had he, who took to flight,
Than was the palfry upon which he sat:
Happy was he, wh'ad steed for gallop light;
For, trot or amble was of sorry rate:
He, who no horse had, here reflection made,
That woeful is, on foot, of arms the trade.

26.

The field and spoils become the victor's right;
For neither foot or muleteer remain:
Here, Maganzes, the Moors, there, take to flight,
Those quit their loads and these their captives ta'en.
They're now, with chearful looks & hearts most light,
Prompt, Malagige and Vivian to unchain:
The pages no less prompt were, who unbound
The carriages and cast the loads to ground.

27.

Besides of silver a good quantity,
Which was wrought up in vessels different,
And various sorts of female drapery,
Where nicest art perform'd each ornament,
And, for apartments royal, tapestry,
Such gold with silk, in Flanders they invent,
And other costly things, in plenty great,
Bread, flasks of wine they found & divers kinds of meat.

28.

On taking off their helmets, they all view,
That, damsel 'twas, who them with aid supply'd,
By her curl'd, golden ringlets, this they knew,
By her fair face, so delicate, beside;
Much honour her and beg, that name, where due
Was so much glory, she'd forbear to hide.
And she, who tow'rs her friends still courteous shews,
Her person to reveal does not refuse.

29.

Their looking on her they can't satisfy,
As, in the combat, they of her had fight.
She marks Ruggier, to him sole does apply,
The rest regards not, seems the rest to flight.
Mean time the servants come, the company
With her, to th' entertainment, to invite,
Which they had ready got, hard by a font,
Which from the summer's ray was shelter'd by a
mount.

30.

This was a fountain, Merlin did design,
One of those four, which have in France their site,
Surrounded all with marble fair and fine,
Polish'd most smooth and than the milk more white.
Here, by engraving with his toil divine,
Merlin had figures drawn in such a light,
You would declare they breath'd: and, if depriv'd
They were not of their voices, that they liv'd.

31.

31.
Here, from a forest, seem'd a beast to pass,
Odious and foul, with look of cruelty,
It's ears and head resemblance bore of as,
Of wolf its teeth, and by vast hunger dry;
It claws of lion had, like fox it was
In all its other parts: and seem'd to fly
O'er England, France and Spain and Italy,
Europe and Asia, nay the whole globe finally.

32.
She ev'ry where the people kill'd and smote,
Plebeians base and heads most proud and vain;
But she most pow'r to hurt seem'd to have got
O'er lords and princes, kings with high domain:
Most mischiefs in the Roman court she wrought;
For there she cardinals and popes had slain:
The lovely seat of Peter foul she'd made,
And she upon the faith had scandal lay'd.

33.
It seems, before this dreadful beast immense,
Each wall, each fence, she touches, tumbles down:
There is no city can make its defence,
Castles and forts to her are open thrown:
To divine honours she seems t' have pretence,
And worship, by th' weak tribe, to her is shown:
And she to have the keys does arrogate,
At will, to open hell or heaven's gate.

34.
After, a knight advancing you behold,
With the imperial laurel crown'd his hair:
Three youths beside him, lilies they of gold
Embroider'd on their royal vestments wear:
And, which with them did the like standard hold,
Lion seem'd 'gainst this monster to repair:
Over their heads some had their names express'd,
And some were wrote on borders of each vest.

35.
One, who, up to the very hilts, had smote,
Ith' paunch of the malignant beast, his blade,
Francis the first of France had o'er him wrote:
Of Austria Maximilian by him stay'd:
And Charles the fifth the emp'ror, thro' the throat
Of the fell monster, had his lance convey'd:
On other, who his dart fix'd in her breast,
Henry the eighth of England was express'd.

36.
That lion had the tenth wrote on his back,
Who fix'd his teeth in the foul monster's ear,
And him h'ad harrafs'd so and did attack,
That many more did in his aid appear:
The world its former dread seem'd to forsake,
And, all their ancient errors to repair,
The noble people hurry'd there, tho' few,
However they the wild beast direful slew.

37.
Marphisa and the cavaliers remain
Intent, who might those people be, to know,
By whose brave hands the monster had been slain,
Who had so many places fill'd with woe:
Since, tho' the names thereon engrav'd were plain,
The stone their persons did not fully show.
Each other they intreated, if they knew
The story, they'd it to the others shew.

38.
Vivian to Malagigi turn'd his eye,
Who stood attentive, nor did utter aught,
And said: to tell this tale does on you lie,
As you herein are learn'd, as is my thought.
Who are these, who did darts and swords apply,
And lances, whence to death this beast they brought:
Malagige answer'd: 'tis not history,
Which any author has preserv'd in memory.

39.
Know then, that they, whose names, you, written, see
Upon the marble, ne'er had living state;
But, they, in seven hundred years, shall be,
And make an after age with fame elate:
The British Merlin, sage in forcery,
In Arthur's time, this font did fabricate,
And what in future should existence have,
Here he caus'd skilful artists to engrave.

40.
This cruel beast from hell's abyss was sent,
What time they first mark'd limits for their ground,
When first they weights and measures did invent,
And men by written contracts first were bound:
But, she, at first, not o'er the whole world went,
A many countries she, as yet, left found:
In our time, she disturbs much many a place;
But most offends the croud and vulgar base.

41.
From her original, to these our days,
She ever grew, and ever will proceed,
Till she herself shall to such monster raise,
That, greater never was, nor e'er so dread:
That Python, which we, in poetic lays,
To be so horrid, so stupendous, read,
Not half so big as this was, in the whole,
Nor so abominable, nor so foul.

42.
She'll cruel slaughter make: nor place there'll be,
Which she don't spoil, infect, contaminate:
And all, which you did in this sculpture see,
To her detested acts i'n't adequate:
Those persons, hoarse with cry incessantly
For some relief, whose names you read but late,
Whose lustre shall Pyropus blaze exceed,
Shall come, to give their aid, in greatest need.

43.

To the fell beast no one shall cause more woe,
 Than Francis will, the sovereign of France :
 And fit 'tis, many he in this outgo,
 And none exceed, few near to him advance ;
 Since he eclips'd does other's glory show,
 (Whilst his own regal blaze he does enhance ;
 Who seem'd in full before : as ev'ry light
 Soon faint appears, when Phœbus is in fight.

44.

In the first year of his propitious reign,
 Ere well his crown is fix'd upon his head,
 He'll pass the Alps and th' enterprize make vain
 Of them, who 'gainst him did those hills invade,
 Spur'd on by just and generous disdain,
 That for those wrongs fit vengeance is not paid,
 Which, from the dwellers fierce o'th' fertile plain,
 The army of the French did late sustain.

45.

And thence to the rich plain he will descend
 Of Lombardy, with all the flow'r of France,
 And the Helvetians so to bits shall rend,
 In vain they'll more their horn hope to advance :
 'Gainst the grand camp, o'th' church and Spain,
 he'll send,
 And Florence shall be sham'd by such mischance,
 To storm the castle, which had, till that hour,
 Been deem'd impregnable by any pow'r.

46.

'Bove other arms, that fortrefs to obtain,
 That honour'd sword shall give him greatest aid,
 With which before he had the monster slain,
 Which did all countries with its filth invade :
 Oppos'd to that, needs must turn back again,
 In flight, each standard, or on earth be lay'd :
 No rampart high, wall gross, or fosse so deep,
 From this, can city safe protected keep.

47.

This prince shall all that excellence possess,
 Which happy emperor still ought to share :
 The courage of great Julius ; the address,
 Which Hannibal at Trebbia made appear :
 The fortune which did Alexander bless,
 Without which flies each scheme in smoke and air :
 He shall so lib'ral prove, that, in my mind,
 You'll scarce his past example, future equal, find.

48.

Thus Malagigi spoke : from whence there grew
 With earnest 'mongst the knights, he'd open lay
 The names of others, who that monster slew,
 Who others had accustom'd been to slay.
 Here, 'mongst the first, Bernard engrav'd you view,
 Whose praises Merlin's writings much display :
 Thro' him, said he, Bibiena shall be known,
 As much as Florence or Siena's neighb'ring town.

49.

More forward, to this enterprize, no one,
 Than Lewis, John, and Sigismond, shall go,
 Gonzaga, Salviat, and of Arragon,
 Of the foul monster each invet'rate foe :
 Francis Gonzaga's there, Fred'ric, his son,
 His father's steps to follow, is not slow :
 And him his son in law and kinsman join,
 This of Ferrara duke, that of Urbine.

50.

Of one of those the son, nam'd Guidobald,
 Will, nor by fire nor any, be surpass'd :
 With Ottobon of Flisco, Sinibald
 Drives the wild beast, they run with equal haste :
 Lewis of Gazolo her neck has gall'd,
 Warm is the steel o'th' arrow, which he cast,
 * With which, and bow too, Phœbus him supply'd,
 What time a sword Mars girded to his side.

51.

Two Hercules and two Hippoliti
 Of Este, Herc'les and Hippolito,
 One of Gonzaga, one of Medici,
 The monster chasing, till she's weary'd, go :
 Julian, it seems, behind his son won't be,
 Nor Ferrant than his brother be more slow,
 Nor Andrew Doria less ready prove,
 Nor Francis Sforza let one 'fore him move.

52.

From the illustrious, bright and gen'rous root
 Of Avalo there's two, whose arms unfold
 The rock, which, from his head to snaky foot,
 Impious Typhæus seems beneath to hold :
 No one, to put to death the horrid brute,
 There is, than these two, presses on more bold ;
 One, matchless Francis of Pescara*, is wrote :
 Alfons of Vasto, t'other at his feet has got.

53.

Gonsalvo Ferrant, have I left behind
 Your glory, which was so much priz'd in Spain,
 Which Malagigi so to praise inclin'd,
 That few could match you of this noble train ?
 William of Montferat we also find
 'Mongst those, who have the filthy monster slain.
 And few were there, to th' number infinite,
 Which she some time did either kill or smite.

54.

In harmless sport and chat of merriment,
 After their meal, they pass'd the sultry day,
 Stretch'd upon carpets most magnificent,
 'Midst flowering shrubs, which made the riv'let
 gay.
 Vivian and Malagige, that more content
 The rest might share, kept watch in arm'd array,
 When they a damsel, without company,
 Perceiv'd advancing to them hastily.

55.

* These beautiful compliments are eras'd by time, as ever must be the case : nor have the Italian commentators done the justice to preserve this particular. Doubtless this gentleman was a poetic genius, as well as a military man.

55.

This that Hippalca was, from whom was ta'en
Frontin, that gallant steed, by Rodomont,
Whom she, the day before, persu'd in vain,
Moving him now by pray'rs, now by affront;
But, as it n'aught avail'd, she turn'd again
Her road, to meet Ruggier in Agrifmont:
She heard upon her way (how I know not)
With Ricciardet she'd find him on that spot.

56.

And as she well the situation knew,
Having been there before, she went foreright
Unto the font, and did such course pursue,
She found him there: as I above did write.
But, as a cautious messenger and true,
Who better acts, than other can endite,
Soon as she Brad'mant's brother did perceive,
That she don't know Ruggier, she made believe.

57.

To Ricciardet herself she quite address'd,
As if directly she for him was bent:
And he, who knew her well, then forward press'd,
To meet her, and enquir'd, which way she went:
She, who her eyes with redness had oppress'd,
From her long grief, said (first a sigh she sent)
But, spoke aloud, that so might reach the ear
Of Ruggier such her speech: as to her he was near.

58.

I, by the rein, she says, with me did lead,
As me your sister's order did enjoin,
A wondrous valuable, lovely steed,
Which she much loves and which she calls Frontin.
With him did more than thirty miles proceed,
Towards Marfeilles, whither she had design
In a few days to come: and did direct,
I should continue there, her coming to expect.

59.

I, in imagination, was so bold,
I fancy'd, none of so stout heart would be,
That he would from me take it, when I told,
That 't was Rinaldo's sister's property;
But vain turn'd out the thought which I did hold;
For ruffian Saracin seiz'd it from me:
Nor, tho' he knew to whom belong'd Frontin,
Would, to restore it to me, he incline.

60.

All yesterday, him, and to-day, I pray'd,
And seeing pray'rs and threats all turn'd out vain,
When many a scoff and curse I'd to him said,
I left him, where hard by he does remain;
Where, sword in hand, he needs the utmost aid,
With his own and the horse's toil and pain,
'Gainst warrior, who so smartly him does ply,
I hope, he will avenge my injury.

61.

Ruggier, at this discourse, strait, up did stand;
For, he was able scarce to hear it thro':
Turning to Ricciardet, as favour grand,
Præmium, reward, for what he late did do,
Adjoining endless pray'rs, he did demand,
Alone, he'd, with the lady, let him go,
Till she, to find the Pagan, him convey,
Who from her hands took the brave horse away.

62.

And Ricciardet, altho' discourtesy
Too much it seem'd, another to admit,
Emprize to finish, which did on him lie,
To Ruggier's will however did submit.
And he his farewell took o'th' company,
And, with Hippalca to turn, got all things fit,
Leaving them all, not in astonishment
Only; but speechless at his valour excellent.

63.

Soon as Hippalca somewhat had disjoin'd
Him from the others, she to him express'd,
How she was sent by her, who on her mind
His bravery so deeply had impress'd:
And, without feigning more, she all subjoin'd,
Her lady to her going had address'd:
And if before she had spoke differently,
It was, by reason Ricciardet was by.

64.

She told: he, who the steed had from her ta'en,
Had also said to her with vaunting pride,
Since to Ruggier the horse does appertain,
For that, to take it I more free decide:
Should he have thought, it ever to regain,
Inform him (for myself I'll never hide)
That I am Rodomont: of whom the might
Is seen, throughout the world, by its own light.

65.

Ruggier show'd, in his face, as he did hear,
With what resentment vast his heart did flame:
As well because he Frontin held most dear
As for the place from whence the present came:
As, taking it, did in contempt appear,
He sees, dishonour he'll incur and shame,
If he from Rod'mont seize it not, with speed,
And suiting vengeance take, for the misdeed.

66.

The lady guides Ruggier, and does not stay,
Wishing to bring him to the Pagan's front:
And comes, where in two tracts divides the way,
One to the plain goes down, one to the mount,
Both of them leading to the valley lay,
Where she had lately quitted Rodomont:
Rugged, but short, the road the hill to gain,
T'other much longer was; but, easy, plain.

E

67

67.

The earnest wish, which did Hippalca guide,
T'avenge th' affront and Frontin to regain,
Caus'd, that the track she up the mountain try'd,
As so much shorter passage to obtain.
Mean time, by t'other, th' Algier king did ride,
With th' Tartar, as I've said, and all that train,
And down the plain kept the more easy beat,
So that Ruggier he did not chance to meet.

68.

They for a while their quarrels did postpone,
Till Agramant they should with aid supply,
And had the cause, as you've already known,
Of all their strifes, Dorlice in company.
Now hear the sequel of my story on:
Unto the fountain their way strait did lie,
Where Aldigier, Marphisa, Ricciardet,
Malagige, Vivian at their ease were set.

69.

Marphisa, as the company besought,
Was dress'd as woman, and such ornament
Had ta'en, as the Maganzes traitor thought
Gifts proper to Lanfusa to be sent:
And tho' it was but rarely she was caught
Without good helmet and accoutrement,
Sh'ad ta'en them off that day: and, as a maid,
At their intreaty, was in gown array'd.

70.

Soon as the Tartar did Marphise survey,
By the belief, she'd easily be got,
In truck for Doralice her to convey,
To Rodomont, he in his mind did plot:
As if love govern'd in so odd a way,
That change or sale of mistress were the lot
Of lover, who for grief could have no ground,
If when he one had lost, he other found.

71.

Therefore a damsel for him to prepare,
That, t'other he might to himself retain,
Marphise, who seem'd to him genteel and fair,
And woman worthy each knight's love to gain,
As this than that must soon prove not less dear,
Her to present, he thought does entertain:
And all the knights, whom with her he espys,
To tilt with him and combat, he defys.

72.

Vivian and Malagige, who arms had got,
As guards and of the others to take care,
Where they were sat, mov'd sudden from the spot,
And for the combat both of them prepare,
Seeing, to tilt with both of them, they thought;
But th' African, for this who came not there,
No sort of signal made, that he would move,
So that the tilt 'gainst only one did prove.

4

73.

Vivian is first, and with brave heart moves on,
And, in advancing, his gross spear abas'd.
The Pagan king for acts of prowess known,
On t'other side, press'd on with greater haste:
Both take their aim and mark the point, whereon,
They thought, best might their cruel strokes be cast:
Vivian, in vain, the Pagan's helmet smote,
So far from falling, he don't cause him flinch one jot.

74.

The Pagan king, who had a lance more sound,
The shield of Vivian made appear like ice:
And, out his saddle, on the verdant ground,
Cast him 'midst herbs and flow'rs in station nice:
Malagige comes: and to th' emprise does bound,
Hoping t'avenge his brother, in a trice:
But, in such haste, to him advancing nigh,
Stead of revenge, he kept him company.

75.

The t'other brother had his arms set right,
Before his kinsman, and leap'd on his steed:
And challenging the Saracin to fight,
Rush'd boldly on, to meet him, at full speed:
The blow rebounds, an inch beneath the fight.
Smote, 'midst the Pagan's helmet polished:
To heav'n the spear flies, in four pieces broke;
But ne'er was mov'd the Pagan at that stroke.

76.

The Pagan him upon the left did smite,
And, as with force too mighty was the blow,
Small aid his shield gave, his cuirass, more slight,
As if it bark had been, it split in two:
The cruel steel pass'd thro' his shoulder white,
Aldigier wounded totter'd to and fro:
Then thrown twixt herbs and flow'rs himself does view,
Ruddy his arms, his face of pallid hue.

77.

With courage vast next Ricciardet came on,
And on his coming lower'd his huge lance,
Who plainly shew'd, as he had oftentimes shewn,
He, worthily, was Paladin of France:
And to the Pagan this he had made known,
If equal favour he had met from chance;
But headlong went he, as o'er him his steed
Fell down; but this fact no excuse did need.

78.

As now no other cavalier remain'd
To face the Pagan, in the tournament,
He thought, the lady, by the tilt, h'ad gain'd,
And so up to her, at the fountain, went:
Then said: my damsel, you I have obtain'd,
Since, none to mount the saddle does present:
You can't deny, nor herein make excuse,
As, by the rule of war, such is the use.

78.

79.

Marphisa, raising, with a haughty look,
 Her face, said : Strangely errs your sentiment :
 I do admit, that you the truth had spoke,
 I should be yours, by war's establishment,
 If, for my lord or cavalier, I took
 Either of those, whom you to earth have sent :
 I am not theirs : none but my own I am :
 Then let him take me from myself, who me wou'd
 claim.

80.

I also shield and lance to manage know,
 And more than single knight to earth have cast :
 Give me my arms, she said, my war horse too,
 To her esquires, who her obey'd in haste :
 Throws off her gown : does in her doublet go :
 Her features fine and body aptly plac'd
 Show'd that she might in ev'ry part compare,
 Except her visage, with the god of war.

81.

Soon as she's arm'd, she girded on her blade,
 And with light vault upon her steed did get :
 And thrice or more, about made him parade,
 And on this side and that wheel and curvet.
 Then, challenging the Pagan, forth convey'd
 Her massy spear : then to th' assault she set :
 Such, in the field, Penthesilee of Troy
 Doubtless appear'd, when she Achilles did annoy.

82.

The spears to bits, quite to their ferrules, fly,
 As they were glass, at this superb attack ;
 But yet, for this, their horses did not ply,
 To be perceiv'd, or single inch give back :
 Marphise, who will'd to know for certainty,
 If, in the combat closer yet, more slack
 Against her the fierce Pagan would not stand,
 Wheels herself round at him with sword in hand.

83.

The Pagan fierce curs'd ev'ry element
 And heav'n, to see, she in her saddle stay'd :
 She too, who was, to crash his shield, intent,
 No less disdainful 'gainst the heav'n's inveigh'd.
 Each had in hand their drawn, dire instrument,
 And on the fated armour pounding lay'd :
 Enchanted armour equally had they,
 Which, neither, e'er, more needed, than that day.

84.

Those coats of mail and breast-plates were so stout,
 There, sword or lance can't bore or cut its way,
 That they their cruel combat might have fought,
 The present and ev'n the succeeding day ;
 But Rodomont in hurry 'twixt 'em got,
 And reprimands his rival for delay :
 Saying, if battle you to fight incline,
 Let's finish 'twixt us that, began of mine.

85.

We made a pact and truce, as to you's known,
 To our own warfare first to give our aid :
 Nor ought we therefore, before that is done,
 Suffer new tilt or combat to be made :
 Thence to Marphise, respectful gesture shown,
 He turns and tells her what the courier said :
 And to her, how he came there, did relate,
 For Agramant their succour to intreat.

86.

Then her requests, if pleas'd her; not alone,
 That she'd forbear this combat, or delay ;
 But, that she'd to th' assistance of the son
 Of the king Trojan, with them take her way :
 Whence, with a flight more lofty, her renown
 Might better up to heav'n its self display,
 Than, by a quarrel of so small a weight,
 A hind'rance, to so glorious plan, create.

87.

Marphisa, who had always been intent
 To try with those of Charles her sword and lance,
 Nor, led by any other purpose, went,
 From regions, which were so remote, to France ;
 But to be certain, if so eminent
 Renown, they had, were truth or meer romance,
 To go, one of the party, soon agreed,
 Knowing, that Agramant stood in great need.

88.

In the mean time, Ruggier, in vain, kept on,
 After Hippalca, by th' road o'er the mount ;
 And when he thither got, to him was known,
 By other way thence set out Rodomont :
 And thinking, he could not far off be gone,
 And that he kept the path strait for the font,
 At full speed trotting, him he did pursue,
 By track upon the way imprinted new.

89.

He will'd, for Montalban Hippalca take
 Her route, which was but journey of one day ;
 Because, if to the fountain she went back,
 'Twould too far lead her out of her strait way :
 And tells her, she no sort of doubt should make,
 That to himself he'd Frontin reconvey :
 He'd cause, at Montalban, she need not fear,
 Or wherefoe'er she was, she soon the news should
 hear.

90.

And to her gave the letter, he did write
 In Agrismont, which h'ad kept in his breast,
 And many things by mouth he did endite :
 Beg'd his excuse might fully be express.
 Hippalca all in mind implanted right,
 Her farewell takes, and round her steed she press'd,
 And the good courier by her speed contriv'd,
 That she to Montalban that night arriv'd.

E 2

91.

91.

Ruggier, in haste, the Pagan did pursue
By tracks, which did on the smooth road appear,
But did not reach him, till he him did view
With Mandricard, unto the fountain near :
They'd promis'd, whilst their journey they pursue,
That all unfriendly acts they would forbear,
Nay, till they to the camp their help convey,
On which Charles ready was the curb to lay.

92.

Ruggier, when got there, his Frontin did know,
And, as he knew it, knew who it did ride :
And o'er his lance his shoulders he does bow,
And th' African with haughty voice defy'd.
Rod'mont that day did patient Job outdo,
As he suppress'd the fury of his pride :
And he, who, in each instance, ever, us'd
To seek out combats, now the fight refus'd.

93.

This was the first, as well as the last day,
The Algier king did e'er refuse to fight ;
But so intent he was, aid to convey
To his own king, that it seem'd to him right :
Had he thought, Ruggier he in's claw could lay,
More sure, than th'hare does leopard swift and light,
He so long time with him would not have stay'd,
'Till with his sword a stroke or two he made.

94.

Nay add to this, that 'twas Ruggier, he knew,
Who with him, for Frontin, provok'd this fight :
So famous, that no Cavalier e'er flew,
In equal pitch with him to glory's height :
The man, with whom he wish'd to prove, by true
Experiment, what was in arms his might :
And yet he'd not, with him, accept th' emprise ;
Upon his mind, his king besieg'd, so strongly lies.

95.

Hundreds of miles, nay thousands he'd have gone,
To seek such fight, did not so matters lay ;
But he'd, than what you hear, no more have done,
Had ev'n Achilles challeng'd him that day :
To such degree, beneath the embers thrown,
He, o'er his flame of fury, kept the sway.
He tells Ruggier, why he the fight denies,
And even begg'd his help in the emprise.

96.

That, this performing, he would act as ought
A knight, who to his lord is faithful friend :
That, ever, when they off the siege had got,
Their quarrel they'd have time enough to end.
Ruggier reply'd to him : to me as n' aught
Appears the case, our combat to suspend,
Till we from Agramant draw Charles's force,
Provided, you restore me first my horse.

97.

If, that thou'st done great crime, to render plain,
And act, for brave man, of unworthy sort,
Having, my horse, thus, from a woman, ta'en,
You will, that I postpone, till w'are at court,
Give up Frontin, at my will to remain :
Nor fancy, otherwise, that I'll support,
That we this fight betwixt us don't pursue,
Or that I'll make, one single hour, a truce with you.

98.

While Ruggier of the African demands
Either Frontin or fight without delay,
And he, with distant put-offs, both withstands,
Nor will give up the horse, nor longer stay :
Mandricard comes, and, on the other hand,
Brings on the field another kind of fray :
As he sees Ruggier, who for arms did wear
That bird, which o'er all others rule does bear.

99.

An eagle white he had, on 'scutcheon blue,
Which of the Trojans was the ensign fair :
Because his origin first Ruggier drew
From Hector powerful, he this did wear ;
But this was matter Mandricard ne'er knew,
And call'd it inj'ry great : nor would he bear,
That any, on their shield, should claim a right,
To put, of Hector fam'd, the eagle white.

100.

Mandricard bore that bird, in the like way,
Which did with Ganymede from Ida flee :
How he obtain'd it, when he won the day
At the fort dang'rous, for gratuity,
And how to him presented it that day,
(I think, those stories you've in memory)
With all those glorious arms, which Vulcan wrought,
For present to the Trojan hero brought.

101.

A former time had been engag'd in fight
Mandricard and Ruggier, for this alone :
And by what chance they then did disunite,
I'll not relate, as it so well is known.
They after on each other ne'er did light,
Till at this hour : and Mandricard now soon,
Seeing the shield, exalts his haughty cry,
And, threat'ning, calls, Ruggier, I thee defy.

102.

Rash man, my ensign thou presum'st to wear :
Nor is this the first day, I've so declar'd :
And think'st thou, fool, that this I still should bear,
Because before I've to thee shown regard ?
But, since, advice and threats unable are
That folly from thy bosom to discard,
I'll show thee, how much better choice thou'dst mad :
Having my orders suddenly obey'd.

103.

As, near the fire much heated, wood that's dry,
To sudden flame a little blast does send,
So into fury's blaze did Ruggier fly,
At first word, he of this did apprehend :
Thou think'st, said he, to force me to comply,
Because this other does with me contend ;
But, that I'm able, I'll soon to thee shew,
To take Frontin from him and Hector's shield from
you.

104.

A former time, I did, for this, prepare,
In fight, nor is't long since, you to have try'd ;
But, at that time, to kill you did forbear,
Because you then no sword had at your side :
This shall be done, t'other was warning fair,
And the white bird to thee shall ill betide ;
That ancient ensign of my family,
Which I bear justly ; but's usurp'd by thee.

105.

'Tis you, usurp my ensign, I maintain,
Mandricard answer'd : and his sword he drew,
Which, tis not long time since, by his crack'd brain,
Orlando from him to the forest threw.
Good Ruggier, who his turn of mind humane
Unable was to let escape his view,
Seeing the pagan had his weapon drawn,
Suffer'd his lance to tumble on the lawn.

106.

At the same time his Balifard he drew,
That trusty blade, and firm his shield embrac'd.
The Pagan spur'd his steed, and 'twixt them flew,
And with him buſtled on Marphise in haste :
And one and t'other both asunder threw,
And beg'd them both, their strife might be appeas'd.
Rodomont vex'd, that twice the contract broke
Mandricard, which 'twixt them they undertook.

107.

First, when Marphisa to obtain he thought,
He stop'd to prove more than one tournament :
Now, Ruggier's arms to take away he fought,
Show'd, that small care tow'rd's Agramant he meant.
If such way, said he, to proceed we ought,
Let's end 'twixt us our cause of discontent :
Tis fitting and by far more justly due,
Than any other, which you now pursue.

108.

Such were the terms our truce was founded on,
And upon this betwixt us we agreed.
When between us the combat I have done,
Then I will answer him, about the steed :
You, for your shield, the quarrel you've begun,
In life remaining, may, to end, proceed ;
But, I such work shall give you, I believe,
That I for Ruggier shall small business leave.

109.

The business, which you think of, you won't do :
Mandricard answer made to Rodomont :
And more work, than you wish, I'll give to you,
And I will make you sweat from foot to front ;
Yet leave enough remaining to bestow,
As water fails not, which flows from the font :
And to Ruggier and thousands with him join'd,
And all the world, if me t'employ inclin'd.

110.

Their anger and their words they multiply,
Now upon one and now on t'other side :
With Rod'mont and Ruggier unitedly
Mandricard furious would the fight have try'd :
Ruggier unus'd to suffer injury,
Promoting strife and squabble, truce deny'd.
Marphise, to all parts, hurries up and down,
To make things up ; but can't perform so much
alone.

111.

As rustic hind, if thro' the lofty mound
The river steals, and by new tracks has torne,
Hastens to stop it, that may not be drown'd
His verdant pastures and the wish'd-for corn :
He shuts this pass : and that does him confound ;
For, if he dams this side from being worn,
On that, he sees the humid banks are weak,
And forth by many a stream the waters break.

112.

So, mean time Mandricard and fierce Ruggier,
And Rodomont in helter skelter to's'd,
That each, than t'other would more stout appear,
And rank superiour to his comrades boast,
Marphise, to quiet all, took ceaseless care,
And toils ; but still her time and labour lost ;
For, as she pushes one, makes one retire,
She sees the other two leap forward in their ire.

113.

Marphisa, them to reconcile intent,
Said, Lords, to my advice, pray, lend an ear :
'Twere wise, to put off all your discontent,
Till Agramant shall be from danger clear :
If each so eager his own case resent,
Ev'n I with Mandricard now interfere :
And I will prove, at last, if me to gain,
By force of arms, he's able, as he did maintain.

114.

If to king Agramant we must give aid,
Let's aid him : and be all 'twixt us agreed.
Thro' me shall not be hinder'd, Ruggier said,
Our going on ; so he restore my steed :
Or let him yield my horse, nor shall be made
More words, or to defence of it proceed :
Either I'll dead upon this spot remain,
Or to the camp return on my own horse again.

115.

115.

Rod'mont reply'd : what you have last exprest'd,
Is not to do, as th' other, thing so slight :
And so persw'd, declaring : I protest,
If on our king any mishap should light,
'Tis thro' your fault ; for on me it don't rest,
That we, in time, do what is just and right.
To this protest no regard Ruggier paid ;
But, by his fury hurry'd, drew his blade.

116.

At th' Algier king he, like wild boar, rush'd on,
And 'gainst him push'd his shoulder and his shield,
And him h'ad driv'n, in such disorder thrown,
That one foot did to quit the stirrup yield.
Mandricard to him cry'd, Ruggier, postpone
The fight, or with me take the field :
And the Affassine cruel, while he spoke,
Upon the helmet gave Ruggier a stroke.

117.

To his steed's neck Ruggier does strait decline,
Nor could he rise, when he would up have got ;
For, other mischief with the first did join,
From Ulien's son, who also on him smote :
Cleft to the cheeks had been his helmet fine,
If not of Admantine temper wrought :
Ruggier his hands quite open spread, thro' pain,
One hand his sword, t' other lets drop the rein.

118.

Along the plain the horse does him convey,
Balifard on the ground behind him lays.
Marphisa, who, in arms, became that day
His comrade, seems with rage of fire to blaze,
That he, alone, 'twixt two, was on such lay :
Of body stout, and mind that merits praise,
She drives at Mandricard, and with th' whole might
She could exert, she him upon the head does smite.

119.

Rodomont after Ruggier springs in haste :
Lost is Frontin, if he to him attain ;
But, Ricciardet and Vivian join'd stood fast,
And 'twixt Ruggier and th' Pagan fix'd remain.
One pushes Rod'mont and him back does cast,
And from Ruggier, by force, does him restrain :
The other (and that Vivian was) his sword
Puts into Ruggier's hand, to sense restor'd.

120.

Soon as brave Ruggier came t' his sense again,
And Vivian to him did his sword impart,
T' avenge the wrong he don't long time remain,
But tow'ards the Algier king does rapid dart :
So lion, who has on the horns been ta'en
Of Buffalo, does not perceive the smart,
Insensible, him, rage, haste, fury make,
His tail he lashes, springs revenge to take.

121.

Ruggier the Pagan's head does ceaseless smite,
And, 'stead of this sword, had he found his own,
Which, as I said, at th' op'ning of this fight,
From out his hand base treachery had thrown,
I truly think, the helmet had prov'd slight
Of Rodomont, to have secur'd his crown :
That helmet, Babel's king caus'd to be made,
When he the stars attempted to invade.

122.

Discord, believing, that there could not be
Other, than quarrels and contentions here,
And that ne'er more truce or tranquillity
'Mongst them, in any station, could appear,
Said to her sister : with security,
Now we may go to see our friars dear.
Let 'em go on : and stay we, where in front
Ruggier had so belabour'd Rodomont.

123.

The blow of Ruggier was so violent,
It caus'd, upon the crupper of Fröhtin,
The helmet hit and that hard tegument,
With which his back had arm'd the Saracin :
And, two or three times, he on all sides went,
Then, as to fall head foremost, did incline :
And he had, in like manner, lost his blade,
If to his hand it fast had not been made.

124.

Marphisa, in mean time, for Mandricard,
Had made his forehead, breast and visage sweat :
And he had also her as little spar'd :
But both their coats of mail were so compleat,
That on all sides not either could be scar'd,
And they, till now, were in an equal state ;
But in a turn, which hasty made her steed,
Marphise had of Ruggier's assistance need.

125.

The palfrey of Marphise, in turn he made
Too short, where the moist meadow caus'd him slide,
Stumbled such way, himself he could not aid
From falling all along on his off side :
And as, in haste, he to rise up essay'd,
By Brigliador, whom did the Pagan ride,
Not over courteous, cross-ways he was thrust
With such a force, that, a new, fall he must.

126.

Ruggier, who, in ill state, the maid espy'd
Cast on the earth, his help did not delay ;
As now he leisure has, since stupefy'd,
Far off from him, t' other had stol'd away :
On th' helmet smites the Tartar and divid-
ed had that stroke his head, as 'twere a spray,
If Ruggier had, in hand, his Balifard,
Or, on head, other helmet Mandricard.

127.

* Spare me, formidable critic ; nay, rather laugh with me ; this being the only time I have been guilty of such an atrocious deed, and the only word that could have tempted me to commit it. Save once, on a more important, and I flatter myself, meritorious, occasion. Vid. C. 42. St. 14.

127.

The Algier king, whose sense mean time grew clear,
Turns himself round, and Riccardet survey'd :
And calls to mind, that he did interfere,
Before, what time he gave to Ruggier aid :
At him he flies and premium most severe,
For his good act, was ready to have paid,
If, with grand art, new sort of forcery
Malagige, 'gainst him, did not soon apply.

128.

Malagige knew all sorts of forcery,
Skillful magician e'er did understand :
Tho' now his book wan't in his custody
With which he'd cause the sun quite steady stand :
Yet conjuration h'ad in memory,
With which he us'd the devils to command :
One he sent into Doralice's horse,
And into sudden madness him did force.

129.

Into the quiet pad, who on his back
Carry'd the daughter of king Stordilan
Caus'd enter one of Minos' devils black,
By one sole word, the brother of Vivian :
And he, who erst his motion dull and slack
Obedient to his master's hand did scan,
O'th' sudden, into air now made his flight,
What leap! of thirty foot in length, sixteen in height!

130.

'Twas a good leap : but not so strong did prove,
Out of their saddle any one to bear :
She scream'd out, when she to such height did move ;
For the poor damsel had of death much fear.
That pad, who needs must go, as devil drove,
After vast bound, away with her did tear,
Who call'd for succour, in such mighty haste,
Scarce could have reach'd her arrow swiftest cast.

131.

Off from the battle hurrys Ulien's son,
At the first sound by that dear voice express'd :
And where the palfrey with wild fury run,
To help the lady at full speed he press'd.
No less than him by Mandricard was done,
Ruggier, Marphise, no more he does molest ;
But, without asking truce or amity,
He after Rodomont and Doralice does fly.

132.

Mean time from ground Marphise rose upright,
And, flaming all with anger and with pride,
Thought, but in vain, to exert her vengeful spite ;
For too far from her she her foe espy'd.

Ruggier, who sees to such end brought the fight,
Roars, more like lion, than as man that sigh'd.
They well knew, that, Frontin and Brigliador
To overtake, their steeds had not the pow'r.

133.

Ruggier will never rest, till he decide
The point, with th' Algier king, about the steed :
Marphise, as she the Tartar had not try'd
Quite to her mind, won't from her wrath recede :
To suffer thus their quarrel to subside,
Would be too great a fault, they both agreed :
By joint consent, they the resolve embrace,
Of those who wrong'd them to pursue the trace.

134.

Them in the camp o'th' Saracins they'll find,
If elsewhere with them first they cannot meet,
As they to raise the siege would go combin'd,
Ere France's king their friends should quite defeat.
Their march directly thither they inclin'd,
As there to have them sure they had conceit :
Ruggier so sudden won't depart from thence,
Till with his comrades he had conference.

135.

Ruggier to them reverted, where apart
The brother of his lovely lady stood,
He friendship proffer'd him in ev'ry part,
Whether his fortune evil prov'd or good,
And him requests (and that with nicest art)
His sister in his name salute he would :
And this he did with so much skill direct,
No cause he gave him or the others to suspect.

136.

And of him, Vivian, Malagigi too,
And wounded Aldigier, his leave did take :
They also their desire to serve him show,
As ever they'll be debtors for his sake :
Marphise, for Paris so intent to go,
T' her friends forgot her compliments to make ;
But Malagige and Vivian went her route
So far, that they at distance her salute :

137.

And Ricciardet too ; but Aldigier lay,
And, 'gainst his will, compell'd was to remain.
Tow'rds Paris the first two had bent their way
And the same road those t'other two had ta'en.
I hope, Sir, in next Canto to display
Acts marvellous, of more than mortal strain,
Which of king Charles's troops with sad defeat
These four perform'd, of whom to you I treat.

CANTO XXVII.

1.

THE female counsels oft we better find
Off hand, than what from cool reflection flows ;
For, this their gift is of peculiar kind,
'Mongst num'rous sort, which heav'n on them
bestows.

But ill turns out what men plan in their mind,
E'er solid reasons they in aid propose,
Where they han't spent, thereon to ruminate,
Some time, much labour and attention great.

2.

It seem'd, yet did not prudent counsel prove
Of Malagige, as I did just relate,
Tho' he his kinsman Richard did remove,
Thereby, from out of perils the most great,
That, by his pow'r, the evil spirit drove
Rod'mont and Mandricard thence to retreat,
Not well confid'ring, that they'd be convey'd
Where thence the christians would be sore dismay'd.

3.

But, if he time had taken to reflect,
We may conceive, he pow'r had, equally,
With fitting aid his kinsman to protect,
And not have done the christians injury :
He able was the spirit to direct,
Into the East or to the West to fly,
And thence the damsel so far off to bear,
In France, of her they no more news might hear.

4.

Her lovers then had follow'd her in flight,
As unto Paris, so to any spot ;
But this was an unguarded oversight-
In Malagigi, from too little thought :
And the from heaven banish'd evil spright,
Who ever blood and fire and mischief fought,
Took that way, whence he Charles could most torment ;
As now his master did not him prevent.

5.

The nag, that by the devil was possess'd,
Carry'd off Doralice half dead with fear,
Whose course the river's self could not arrest ;
Much less, fofs, wood, marsh, rock or desert bare :
Thourough the French and English camp he press'd,
And other multitudes, who fav'ers were
O'th' christian banner, nor e'er made a stand,
Till brought unto Granada's king her father's hand.

6.

Her Rodomont and Mandricard pursue,
Their first day's journey, for a tedious space,
Who tho' at distance vast, her shoulders view,
At last lose sight of her : and by her trace,
Follow her, as the dog is us'd to do
That hare or goat accustom'd is to chase :
Nor stop'd they, till they to that quarter bear,
Where, that she's in her father's hands the news they
hear.

7.

Look to thy self, Charles ; at thy back comes on
Such fury, no escape for you I see ;
For king Gradasso moves, not there alone,
And Sacripant, to your camp's injury :
Fortune, to touch thee deep quite to the bone,
Takes one and th' other light, at once, from thee,
Of strength and wisdom, which late with thee liv'd,
And thou in darkness art, of sight depriv'd.

8.

Orlando and Rinaldo 'tis I mean ;
The one, with furiously distemper'd brain,
Thro' cold, thro' heat, in sunshine or in rain,
Flies about, naked, over hill and plain ;
The other, with a mind not much more sane,
Himself, in greatest need, has from you ta'en,
Who, as in Paris he can't Ang'lic find,
Seeking her footsteps, is from you disjoin'd.

9.

A false, old, practiser in sorcery
Made him, as I at first did represent,
Believe, by a fantastic fallacy,
Angelica with her Orlando went :
From whence, his heart enflam'd with jealousy,
Greater no lover ever underwent,
He comes to Paris : when to court he got,
For Britain to depart fell to his lot.

10.

Now, the fight done, whence he the fame did share,
That he king Agramante did empound,
In Paris he to th' convents did repair,
And houses, castles all he search'd around :
If 'twixt the columns not immur'd she were,
Her the so pry'ng lover would have found :
Seeing nor her there, nor Orland, at last,
To seek them both, he goes, in utmost haste.

11.

11.

In Brava or Anglant, he was of mind,
Orlando was, in mirth and feasting, gay :
And, here and there, he hurry'd, her to find,
Nor met her, in that place, or on that day :
To Paris, therefore, he again inclin'd,
Conceiving, that could not make long delay
The Paladine, ere he came to that place,
As, now, his absence wa'n't without disgrace.

12.

A day or two within the city stay'd
Rinald : and as Orlando came not there,
He now tow'rs Anglant, now tow'rs Brava made,
Searching, if of him he some news could hear :
He rides, when night comes on or day's display'd,
In scorching noon or in the morn's fresh air :
And, by the moon's pale glow or sun's bright ray,
Hundreds of times, not one alone, he goes that way.

13.

But, the old en'my, who did Eve delude,
Her hand on the forbidden fruit to raise,
Charles, on a day, with eye malignant view'd ;
As brave Rinald remote from him now stays :
And seeing, at that time, what havock rude
To make on th' christians in his power lays,
What excellence in arms on earth there were,
'Mongst all the pagans, he conducted there.

14.

Tow'rs king Gradals and brave king Sacripant
Become companions, when they did depart
From the delusive mansion of Atlant,
To come to th' succour, he put in their heart,
Of the besieged troops of Agramant,
To Charles the emp'rour ruin to impart :
And he, along those countries quite unknown,
Made their road easy and them guided on.

15.

And on another imp the business lay'd,
Rod'mont and Mandricard to bring with haste
Along the steps whence t'other spright convey'd
Doralice, and with speed advanc'd more fast.
He sends another, lest might be delay'd
Of Ruggier and Marphise the prowess vast ;
But he, who had the last two, should contrive,
To check the rein and not with th' others to arrive.

16.

Marphisa and Ruggier that couple bright,
More than an half hour, later he did lead :
Seeing that cunningly the evil spright,
A blow to give the christians, had decreed,
He took fit care, that, for the horse, their fight
Should not fall out, his wishes to impede,
Which would be recommenc'd, if there they came,
With Rod'mont and Ruggier, at point of time the
same.

17.

The first four at the place together join'd,
Whence they the sev'ral cantonments could view,
O'th' force oppress'd, and those who them confin'd,
And various banners, which the breezes blew.
They call'd, sometime, a counsel and each mind
This one conclusion, from their consult, drew :
In spite of Charles, they'd their assistance give
King Agramant, and him would from the siege relieve.

18.

Together they unite and take the way
Thro' that part where the christiantents were lain:
All the while crying out, Spain ! Africa !
And, that they pagans were discover'd, plain.
Throughout the camp, arm ! arm ! they're heard
to say ;
But the severe attack they first sustain :
And of the rear-gard a great company
Scarce are assaulted, but they routed fly.

19.

The christian army, in a tumult thrown,
Hurry in crouds ; but the case do not know :
Some think, it may be casual insult shown
By Swifts or Gascons, us'd such acts to do ;
But, as to most the matter is unknown,
Each nation into sep'rate tribes does go,
Some, to the drum's, some to the trumpet's sound :
The rumour's vast and does to heav'n rebound.

20.

Th' intrepid emperor arm'd quite compleat,
Except his head, his Paladins there nigh,
Demands, what may be of this case the state,
That caus'd his troops thus in disorder fly :
And this he stops, and that does sharply threat,
Many in face and breast slash'd does descry,
Some wounded in their throat or bloody head,
Others, their hands or arms dis sever'd, fled.

21.

More forward goes, and there he numbers found
Laying on earth, rather vermilion lake,
In their own blood, in horrid manner, drown'd,
* Physician ne'er need them more visit make :
And from their busts sees heads cast to the ground
And legs and arms : the sight would cause one shake
And from the foremost lodgment to the last,
Finds with dead bodies ev'ry place o'ercast.

22.

Where'er advances this small company,
Worthy eternally to share renown,
In a long train those direful tokens lie,
Which to the world for ever will be known.
The cruel carnage Charles does closely eye,
Into disdain, resentment, wonder thrown :
As he, who's damag'd by the light'ning's blast,
Thro' his house searches by what tracks it pass'd.

F

23.

* Here is a very trivial freedom taken ; but it has the sanction of the original in so many places, that it is hoped the crime is at least venial, if even the alteration is not admitted to be for the better.

23.

Scarce at the outworks was as yet supply'd
 The king of Afric with this primal aid ;
 But, with Marphisa, on the other side,
 Himself the valiant Ruggier there convey'd.
 Soon as had once or twice about them ey'd
 This noble couple and had well survey'd,
 Which might be shorteft way, help to supply
 To the besieged king, they rapid fly.

24.

As when to spring a mine the fire they set
 Of sooty dust to the continu'd train
 The blaze licentious burns and on does get,
 One's eye can scarce an equal pace maintain :
 And, as we hear the crash, when overfet
 Is massy fort, or wall is burst in twain,
 In such way Ruggier and Marphise appear'd,
 And such way, in the fight, their force was heard.

25.

Forward and cros to cleave the heads in two,
 And cut the arms and sholders, they prepare,
 Of the croud, who in motion were too slow
 To get off and the path before them clear ;
 Whoe'er has seen the track where tempests blow,
 Which one part of the vales or mountains tear,
 And leave the other, well may represent,
 The course those warriors, 'mongst the wretches,
 went.

26.

Many, who from the rage of Rod'mont flew,
 And from those others foremost, off did get,
 Thank'd heav'n, who them so kindly did endure
 With legs so light, and expeditious feet,
 Now themselves mock'd, in breast and forehead view,
 Soon as Marphisa and Ruggier they meet.
 Thus, mortal, whether he remain or fly,
 Cannot oppose appointed destiny.

27.

Who shuns one danger, other meets in flight,
 And with his flesh and bones, pays forfeit dear :
 So, with her young, in the dog's jaws does light
 The tim'rous fox, hoping them off to bear,
 When from her ancient den her does affright
 The hind, who num'rous crimes lays to her share :
 And with the smoke and sulphur her does chace
 Cunningly out of her well cover'd place.

28.

Into the ramparts of the Saracin
 Marphisa and Ruggier securely went :
 Here ev'ry one of them, with eyes supine,
 Thank heaven, for so fortunate event :
 No more they now dread any Paladin,
 The meanest Pagan now would challenge Cent :
 And 'tis concluded, that they instantly
 Should sally forth, the field with blood to die.

I

29.

Horns, clarions, cymbals of the Moorish kind.
 Fill all the heav'ns with formidable sound,
 In the air tremble from the breezy wind
 Are seen the flags and banners all around.
 On t' other side Charles's commanders join'd
 The Germans and the Britons most renew'd
 With those of England, France and Italy,
 Then in a bloody war they mingle, furiously.

30.

The prowess terrible of Rodomont,
 Of Mandricard the fury beyond bound,
 That of Ruggier of valour very font,
 Of king Gradals through the world so renown'd,
 And of Marphisa the intrepid front,
 Circassia's king to none inferiour found,
 Caus'd, on St. John, and on St. Denis cry,
 The king of France, and back to Paris fly.

31.

Of all those knights th' unconquer'd bravery,
 The actions wonderful Marphise did do,
 Were of a sort and manner, Sir, too high,
 For one to form in mind, much less to show :
 Thence, you may think, what numbers there must
 dye
 Upon that day, and what a cruel blow
 Charles must sustain : and likewise to them add
 Many Moors famous Ferrau with him had.

32.

Many, i' th' Sein, thro' hurry, drowned were,
 The bridge such numbers vast could not contain;
 All wish'd they Icarus's wings did share,
 As death, before, behind them, was so plain.
 Except Vienna's Marquiss and Ugier,
 Every Paladin was pris'ner ta'n,
 Olivier wounded, his retreat had made,
 In his right shoulder, Ugier with a fractur'd head.

33.

And if, as Rinald and Orland were gone,
 Brand'mart his part had acted in this play,
 Charles, out of Paris driven, must have flown,
 If from the flames he could have got away :
 All in his power Brandimart had done,
 Unable more, gave to their fury way.
 Thus Agramant does fortune's smiles obtain,
 Who on king Charles now lays the siege again.

34.

The cries and complaints of widows desolate,
 Of orphan children, aged, in despair,
 To the serene eternal, wherein fate
 Michael, now mounted thro' the turbid air :
 And caus'd him see the faithful, at such rate,
 Become the prey of wolves, the raven's share,
 Of France, of England, and of Allemain,
 Whose bodies cover'd all the bloody plain.

35.
The angel blest with blush his visage dy'd,
Seeming to him, that he had ill obey'd
His maker : and, that him deceiv'd had, cry'd,
That same perfidious Discord and betray'd !
To light up strifes, the Pagans to divide,
And ill perform'd, were the commands he lay'd ;
Rather quite contrary to his intent
She all had done, as seen was in th' event.

36.
As faithful servant, who's of love sincere,
But treach'rous mem'ry, who does recollect,
Something, which, than his life and soul, more dear
He ought to hold, he mindless did neglect,
Studies, in haste, his error to repair,
Eager his Lord him may not first detect ;
So th' angel up to heaven would not rise,
Till he his bounden duty satisfys.

37.
Unto the monastery, where late he met
Discord, with pinions well directed flew,
And in the chapter-house he found her set,
Of officers at an election new,
She took delight to see how in their fret
The mass-books at each head the friars threw.
His hand the angel clench'd within her locks,
And ceaseless gave her many kicks and knocks.

38.
After, the handle of a cross he broke
About her arms, about her back, her head :
The wretch roar'd loud and mercy did invoke,
And at the angel's knees petitioned :
Michael continues his repeated stroke,
Till to the king of Afric's camp she fled :
Then says : expect that you'll worse treated be,
If you out of this camp again I see.

39.
As now of discord were so sorely broke
The arms and back, she was in deadly fear,
Another time, that she beneath such stroke
Immenfe might fall and fury so severe :
She runs and hastily her bellows took,
And to the lighted fires brought feuel near,
And, lighting others up, contriv'd to raise,
In many hearts, of ire a mighty blaze.

40.
And Rodomont, Ruggier, and Mandricard
She so inflam'd, she makes all haste away
Now to the Moor : so that don't press so hard
On Charles the foe ; rather have vantage they :
Their differences each to him declar'd,
And the source whence they sprung before him lay :
To the king's judgment then themselves submit,
Which, first, to take the field, he should think fit.

41.
Marphisa also does declare her case,
And that her fight she'll end, she does protest,
Commenc'd with th' Tartar, for that, as she was
Provok'd such way by him, she hither press'd :
Nor would to any single one give place,
Nor ev'n one hour, much less a day would rest ;
But, to be first, exerts her utmost might,
Who may demand the Tartar to the fight.

42.
Rod'mont his first turn will not have delay'd,
The emprise with his rival now to end,
Which he, to give the Afric army aid,
Did late break off, and ev'n till now suspend.
Ruggier to all the camp his speech display'd,
And says, to bear does him too much offend,
That Rodomont should still detain his steed,
And with him, first, not to the fight proceed.

43.
The Tartar comes, the whole more to confuse,
And to Ruggier by all means does deny,
That the white eagle he as arms should use,
And into furious rage so wild does fly,
He would, if t' other should not it refuse,
At the same bout all the three quarrels try :
Nor would the others herein more have fail'd,
If to obtain the king's consent they had prevail'd.

44.
King Agramant, with pray'rs and counsel kind,
Did all he could, to peace they might be got :
And when at last he all perverse does find,
Alike to peace or truce consented not,
He thinks, at least so to compose each mind,
The field, one after t' other, to allot :
And, that best method 'twas, at last he saw,
That, for the field, each one his chance should draw.

45.
* Caus'd them four tickets put : one Mandricard
And Rodomont contain'd, together wrote :
In t' other was Ruggier and Mandricard :
Rodomont and Ruggier t' other had got :
T' other Marphisa said and Mandricard :
Then, for th' unstable goddess to allot
Caus'd them be drawn : the first the Lord was stout
Of Sarza, who with Mandricard came out.

46.
Mandricard and Ruggier next lot obtain :
In the third Rodomont was and Ruggier :
Mandricard and Marphise undrawn remain,
On which the lady did disturb'd appear :
Nor does Ruggier, than her, more pleasure gain ;
He knows, the first two of such prowess were,
They'd end the contest 'twixt them in such guise,
Nothing they'd leave for him or for Marphise.

* This is in conformity to the original, where the length of the names admitted no other rhymes to be attempted, consequently neither could the copy. This kind of difficulty has, on the same account, frequently arisen, which is recommended to the reader's observation ; in case an unavoidable similitude of rhymes should here and there fall out, in regard to the first translation, which has been as industriously declined as was possible.

47.
Not distant far from Paris, spot does lay,
A mile or little less is its extent,
A lofty bank surrounds it ev'ry way,
As if for a rich theatre 'twere meant :
A castle once stood here, the fabric gay
All by the fire and sword to ruin went :
Such sort of place upon the road does show,
What time to Borgo you from Parma go.

48.
The lifts constructed were upon this site,
With little stakes of wood all round include,
In square exact, form'd, for such purpose, right,
With two capacious gates, as is the use.
The day was come, when the king will'd should
fight

The cavaliers, who scorn'd to form excuse :
Near to the barriers, upon either side,
Against the palisades the tents were ty'd,

49.
In the pavilion fronting to the west,
The Algier king, limb'd like a giant stood,
Him with his skin of scaly serpent dress'd
Sacripant, and Ferrau that warrior good.
Gradass and Falsiron knight hardiest
Were on the other side, which eastward view'd,
With their own hands, in arms, once Trojan wore,
They dress of the king Agrican the successor.

50.
Upon his spacious judgment seat, sublime
Sat Afric's king : the Spaniard to him near :
Then Stordilan and those in rank the prime,
Whom th' army of the Saracins revere.
Happy, who can to hills or summits climb
Of trees, above the plain himself to rear.
Vast is the press and crouds, on ev'ry side,
Around the fence rowl, like the flowing tide.

51.
With the Castilian queen upon her throne
Were queens, princesses, ladies of high fame,
Of Sevil, of Granada, Arragon,
From the Atlantic pillars quite they came :
Stordilan's daughter seated there was one,
Whose vestment rich two sorts of cloth did frame,
Of ill-dy'd scarlet one, one green was made,
The former pale, as thence the tincts did fade.

52.
In dress succinct Marphisa was array'd,
Such as well suited female warrior's wear,
Thermoodon such way perhaps survey'd
Hippolita, whose troop so vested are.
Now, with the shield, which the device display'd
Of Agramant, does on the field appear
The herald, to forbid, the law to lay,
By word or deed, none meddle in the fray.

53.
Eagerly the thick croud expect the fight,
And oft, on the delay, their blame is thrown,
Of one and now of t' other famous knight :
When rose from Mandricard's pavilion
A rumour loud, which grew still to more height.
Now know, Sir, that the monarch of renown
Of Serican and the Tartarian stout
Made all that noise, was heard and horrid rout.

54.
Serican's king having the arms apply'd
With his own hands to th' Tartar king all o'er,
When he advanc'd to gird upon his side
The lofty sword, which, late, Orlando wore,
Grav'd on the pommel, Durindan he spy'd,
The coat of arms too, which once Almont bore,
Which from that wretch had taken, at a font,
Orlando, then a youth, in Aspramont.

55.
He certain is, as soon as it he view'd,
That famous one 'twas of the Lord Anglant,
Which he, with grandest, fairest fleet, persu'd,
That ever yet set sail from the Levant,
And of Castiglia had the realm subdu'd,
And few years since o'er France did conquest
vaunt,
But, by what chance, in no sort understands,
Mandricard now had got it in his hands.

56.
And asks, by force or pact, if he did gain
This from the Count : the time and place recite.
And Mandricard said, that he did maintain,
For it, against Orland, a tedious fight :
And that therefore himself he mad did feign
Hoping thereby he could disguise his fright ;
For he with me must ceaseless war have made,
In his possession whilst he kept that blade.

57.
And said ; the beaver he did imitate,
Who does himself o'th' genitals deprive,
Seeing the hunter close upon his beat,
Knowing, for that, he after him does drive.
Gradass, ere hearing all he would relate,
Says, nor to you or other it I'll give,
Which me, so many men, such pains, such gold
Has cost, 'tis just I for mine own it still should hold.

58.
Seek to supply yourself with other blade ;
For, this I'll have : nor let it strange appear :
Whether Orland be in his sense or mad,
Where'er I lit on't, it I meant to wear :
You've seiz'd it somewhere, on the highway lay'd,
Without just proof ; for proof I now declare :
My scimitar my arguments shall speak,
And in the barrier let's our trial make.

59.

Get yourself ready first this to obtain
 Ere it you against Rodomont apply :
 The ancient usage is, first arms to gain,
 Ere knight, to combat, other does defy.
 To sound more sweet my ear can not attain,
 Replies the Tartar, rais'd his visage high,
 Than when of battle is the argument ;
 But you must first get Rodomont's consent.

60.

Contrive, that yours be first, and that may take
 The Sarzan king the second bout to try :
 And, that I'm ready, you no doubt need make,
 To you and ev'ry other to reply.
 Ruggier cry'd out, I won't permit ye break
 The pact, nor more confuse our lottery :
 Or first let Rodomont ascend the field,
 Or, after mine to be, his combat yield.

61.

If of Gradass has weight the argument,
 Ere we make use of arms, they should be got,
 The white-wing'd eagle, which is my atch'ment,
 Before you use, you to disarm me ought ;
 But, as already I gave my consent,
 I won't appeal against my proper vote :
 Then let the second combat mine remain,
 As, to the Algier king the first does appertain.

62.

If you the rank disturb in one degree,
 I will disturb it also totally :
 My shield I mean not shall be worne by thee,
 If with me now you don't the combat try.
 Were even Mars himself either of ye,
 Mandricard answers, then in anger high,
 Not one or t' other of ye could refuse
 Me, this brave sword, these noble arms to use.

63.

And, by his choler urg'd he forward shot,
 With his clench'd fist, up to the Serican,
 And his right hand in such a way he smote,
 He him compell'd to let go Durindan.
 Gradass, who, that he'd prove so rash, ne'er thought,
 Of such fool-hardiness, and so insane,
 Was taken unaware, standing at bay,
 And finds, from him, the trusty blade is ta'en away.

64.

Insulted thus, with shame he glows and ire,
 And seem'd as if flames flash'd from forth his face :
 And more the case afflicts, torments him high'r,
 As to him happ'ning in so public place :
 Eager, revenge to take, he does retire,
 To draw his scimitar, some little space.
 Mandricard in himself does so confide,
 That Ruggier too for combat he defy'd.

65.

Come, both of ye together, to my face,
 And come, to make a third, now Rodomont,
 Africa, Spain, and all the human race ;
 For I'm prepar'd still to oppose my front :
 Thus speaking, he, who fear deems crime most base,
 Around him wheels the weapon of Almont,
 Haughty and fierce the shield he does embrace
 Against brave Ruggier and against Gradass.

66.

Gradass said, let the business on me lie,
 The madness of this man to set to right :
 By heav'n, said Ruggier, that I thee deny ;
 For, it is fitting, this should be my fight :
 Go back, you ; you go back, incessant cry,
 Not one step moving either from their site :
 And fall together in a fight of three,
 That an odd kind of sport was like to be :

67.

If many persons did not interpose
 To calm that rage ; who'd no great wisdom shown ;
 For, at their cost, they learnt, 'tis dear to those,
 Who others save from danger, by their own :
 Nor the whole world could ever them compose,
 If, with the king of Spain, came not the son
 Of famous Trojan : soon as him they view,
 Profound respect and reverence all shew.

68.

Agramant caus'd the case be open lay'd
 Of this new strife, which did so high advance :
 Then, to dispose, his utmost pow'r essay'd,
 That, for that single day's continuance,
 To Mandricard of Hector sam'd the blade
 Gradasso would admit, in complaisance :
 Till the sharp controversy he conclude,
 Which he now against Rodomont persu'd.

69.

* While, to appease them, studies Agramant,
 And, now, with this, now, with that, reason tries,
 From out the other tent, 'twixt Sacripant
 And Rod'mont, noise of other strife does rise.
 Circassia's king, as I did late descant,
 To Rodomont the part of squire supplies,
 And he and Ferrau him had dress'd all o'er
 With th' arms of Nimrod his progenitor.

70.

And, where the steed was, then advanc'd they were,
 Who his rich rein still champing frothy made :
 I mean the brave Frontin, for whom Ruggier
 Wrathful, disdainful more than ever, stay'd.
 Sacripant, who's to fit such cavalier
 Out for the combat, curiously survey'd
 If nicely shod, well furnish'd, in each part,
 The horse might be, by rule of strictest art.

71.

* Whoever considers the difficulty of obtaining rhimes in our language, will be perhaps less surprized than I was, in seeing in this and other places, I had involuntarily fallen into some resemblance of what I endeavoured to avoid ; but was afterwards unalterable.

71.
And coming more minutely him to view,
His marks, his gesture, limbs well turn'd for speed,
Beyond all sort of doubt, he clearly knew,
This was his Frontalatt, his very steed !
For whom he once had such affection true,
For whom he thousand times had combated :
And once when taken from him, he inclin'd
Ever to go on foot, he so repin'd.

72.
Brunell before Albracca it had ta'en
From under him, upon the very day,
When he by theft Angelic's ring did gain,
Took Orland's Balifard and horn away,
And from Marphise her sword : this, when again
He from his journey turn'd to Africa,
With Balifard, to Ruggier did present,
Which by the name of Frontin after went.

73.
Soon as he knew, he safely might proceed,
To th' Algier king, Circassia's, turn'd, did say :
I'd have you know, Sir, that this is my steed,
Once at Albracca from me stol'n away :
I have good evidence to prove the deed,
But, as they from us too far distant lay,
I will support, should any it deny,
With arms in hand, my words are verity.

74.
I'm well content, for the society,
Which 'twixt us, these few days, we've carry'd on,
For you, this day, the steed, as loan, should be,
As, without him, I see, nought can be done ;
But, with this pact, that 'tis my property,
And, that 'tis lent by me, I'll have you own :
Conceive not him to have by other right,
If previously you with me do not fight.

75.
Rod'mont, than whom, person of greater pride
Never yet had of war the total trade,
To whom, as to his strength and courage try'd,
I think, himself ne'er ancient equal made,
Sacripant, any one, who durst, reply'd,
Except yourself, to me such words have said,
To his own sorrow, quickly should have seen,
To be born dumb had happy'r for him been.

76.
But, as thou'st said, for the society,
Betwixt us, lately, we have carry'd on,
I am content t' have such respect for thee,
T' admonish thee, such emprise to postpone,
Till of this combat thou th' effect may'st see,
'Twixt me and th' Tartar to be lighted soon ;
Where, I'll such sample show, no doubt I make,
Thou'lt say, returning thanks, the steed, pray, take.

* Indulge me with excuse for now and then using an uncommon word, for rhyme-sake. However, permit me to say, those acquainted with the original, well know it is a freedom therein authorized. And we know, in so long a work, a particular word, phrase or dialect, not improperly or too frequently applied, makes a variety and sometimes gives a dignity. Indeed this has the sanction of Milton, and from him of Mr. Johnson. Suffice this for all other instances, which have been attentively guarded against being too numerous.

77.
Infolence is thy sort of courtesy :
Said the Circassian raging with disdain ;
But now I clearly say, more openly ;
The steed to have, no fancy entertain :
From thee I'll it defend, as long as I
This my avenging sword in hand sustain :
Nay, will employ, 'gainst thee, my teeth and nails,
If, to defend it, other method fails.

78.
From words they up to higher contest went,
To roaring out, to threat'nings and to fight,
Which quicker blaz'd, thro' anger violent,
Than by the fire dry straw did ever light :
Rod'mont had helmet, each accoutrement,
Of armour Sacripant divested quite,
But seem'd to work so well, defence he made
His body wholly cov'ring with his blade.

79.
The puissance was not or ferocity
Of Rodomont, altho' 'twas infinite,
More, than the forecast and dexterity,
Which aided Sacripant with utmost might :
The wheel ne'er turns with more velocity
The upper grindstone, whence is corn * attrite,
Than Sacripant his hand or foot work'd round,
This side or that, wherever need he found.

80.
But Ferrau, Serpentin, of courage rare
Drawing their swords, swiftly amidst them bore,
Follow'd by king Grandonio, Isolier,
And other lords the subjects of the Moor.
These were the noises, which as they did hear,
From out of the pavillion just before,
To reconcile them, thither came in vain
The Tartar, Ruggier and the Serican.

81.
One came, who brought king Agramant the news,
Which he as certain told, that, for a steed,
Now Sacripant with Rodomont pursues
A fierce assault, to which they now proceed.
The king, whom such vast discords did confuse,
Said to Marfilius : do you here take heed,
That 'twixt these warriors nothing worse betide,
Whilst I 'gainst other skirmishes provide.

82.
As Rod'mont does the king, his sov'reign see,
He curbs his pride and back a step does go :
Circassia's king, not less civility,
At Agramant's approach, retires, to show :
He asks, what of such wrath the cause might be,
With royal air, and speech sedate and low :
And tries, soon as he all does comprehend,
To reconcile them ; but all to no end.

83.

King Sacripant his steed will not admit
 With th' king of Algiers longer to remain,
 If he, in words, would not so far submit
 To ask and it by way of loan obtain.
 Rod'mont, as usual, in a haughty fit,
 Reply'd, nor you, nor heav'n shall me constrain,
 *That I, for thing, which I by force can take,
 To other an acknowledgment should make.

84.

The king ask'd the Circassian by what right
 He had the steed, and how from him 'twas ta'en :
 And by degrees he all set in clear light,
 Blushing all o'er, whilst he did this explain,
 When he relates, how thief, by cunning slight
 Did, o'er him in deep thought, advantage gain,
 Who on four spears his saddle propt did set,
 And, from beneath, his naked horse did get.

85.

Marphise, who with the rest came, at the cry,
 On hearing what, of the stol'n horse, they say,
 Seem'd troubled, as she'd now in memory,
 That she her sword had lost, that very day :
 And that same steed, which seem'd with wings to fly,
 Again she knows, which from her got away :
 She brave king Sacripant remembers too,
 Whose person she before by no means knew.

86.

The others round there, who, his vauntury
 Brunello make of this, did often hear,
 Tow'rds him began to turn about each eye,
 And, that he was the man, give tokens clear.
 Marphise, suspecting, to learn certainly,
 Asks one and t' other, who to her stood near,
 Until she had a full discov'ry made,
 That 'twas Brunel, who from her stole her blade.

87.

And knew, for theft, whence his reward to gain,
 'Twas fit a halter stout his neck should bind,
 King Agramant the whole Tangiers domain,
 By a new precedent, to him assign'd :
 Marphise her ancient wrath resumes again,
 And her revenge to take, just now, design'd,
 And punish the affronts and wrongs receiv'd,
 Upon the road so of her sword depriv'd.

88.

Her helmet, on her, caus'd her squire to bind,
 For she was drest in all her arms beside ;
 Without her coat of mail, I do not find,
 She ten times in her life was e'er espy'd,
 From that day, when to custom she inclin'd
 For her brave self such safety to provide.
 Her helmet on, she went, where 'mongst the prime
 Brunell was seated on the bench sublime.

89.

At coming up, fast hold of him she lays
 'Midst of his breast, and hoists him up in air,
 As, with his talons crook'd, is us'd to raise
 The rav'nous eagle chick he means to tear :
 And, such way, thither, where commenc'd the frays,
 Before king Trojan's son, she him does bear :
 Brunell himself in such bad hands espys,
 Ceaseless laments and loud for mercy cries.

90.

'Bove all the bustle, noise, and uproar dread,
 With which the field was fill'd near equally,
 Brunell, who pity, now, now, ask'd for aid,
 As he came on, caus'd to be heard his cry,
 So that the sound, his lamentations made,
 Caus'd all around the people thither fly.
 In presence now of Afric's king, Marphise,
 With haughty look, address'd him in this guise.

91.

This thief, your vassal I've in mind decreed,
 To hang up by the neck, with my own hand :
 For that upon the very day his steed
 He took from him, he stole from me my brand ;
 But, if there's any say, I wrong proceed,
 To speak such word, let him before me stand,
 For, in your presence, I'll support, in fight,
 That he's a liar, and I do what's right.

92.

But, as perhaps some blame might on me lay,
 That, 'midst so many strifes, I this intend,
 While these most fam'd in arms, each different fray,
 Are interrupted all, till they shall end,
 Three days the hanging him I will delay,
 Till some, tow'rds his assistance come or send ;
 For, after, if none come me to prohibit,
 I'll thousand † birds regale upon his gibbet.

93.

At tow'r, which near three leagues from hence does lay
 In front of yonder little grove's retreat,
 Without more company, I mean to stay,
 Than with one female servant, one valet :
 If any dares to come and take away
 This thief, there let him come : I'll for him wait :
 Thus said she : and, to go there suddenly
 Took to her road, nor tarry'd for reply.

94.

Before her on her horse's neck does throw
 Brunell, fast holding him still by the hair :
 The wretch roars out, suffering such pain and woe,
 Calling those names, whose help he us'd to share.
 These matters intricate embarrass'd so
 Agramant, he can't see how them to clear :
 And far more grating to him does appear
 The way, Brunell Marphise off does bear.

* This concisely touched character brings the figure forward finely ; so that we see the tyrant's sentiments of his duty toward's gods and men.

† The meniment of these birds, though I suspect them not to be singing ones, express in the original, seems to admit some kind of merriment in the rhimes of the copy.

95.

Not that he bore him love or priz'd him aught,
 Rather, for many days, he him did hate,
 And oft, of hanging him, himself had thought,
 Since of the ring the loss unfortunate;
 But this act seem'd against his honour wrought,
 'Whence on his face glow'd blush immoderate:
 In haste, in person, after her he'd make,
 And, to his utmost pow'r, his vengeance take.

96.

But, king Sobrin here present, on this case,
 Dissuades him much this emprise not to try:
 Saying to him, that it ill suiting was
 Th' exalted station of his majesty,
 Tho' of his proving conquerour he has
 The firmest hope, nay even certainty;
 More to his blame, than honour 'twou'd be said,
 That, with much toil, he'd overcome a maid.

97.

Small was the honour, but the danger great,
 In ev'ry fight, with her he'd undertake:
 And, as his best advice, does him intreat,
 That to the gallows he'd Brunell forsake:
 And if he thought, one brow to elevate
 Would, from the halter, him, suffice to take,
 He should not raise it, so not to dispute,
 Any what justice is should execute.

98.

You may send one, Marphisa to intreat,
 He said, she'd let you in this case decide,
 With promise, that you'll cause this sorry cheat
 The halter have and she be satisfy'd:
 And ev'n tho' she refuse still obstinate
 Leave him to her, be her will gratify'd:
 So she from you withdraw not her relief,
 Let her hang up Brunell and ev'ry thief.

99.

King Agramant most readily agreed
 With the wise judgment of Sobrin discreet:
 And let Marphisa go: nor did proceed
 Nor suffer'd others rudely her to treat;
 And, to petition her, prohibited,
 Submitting, heav'n knows with what courage
 great,
 Those greater strifes, that he might quiet make,
 And from his camp such vast disturbance take.

100.

Hereupon Discord laugh'd, as she were mad;
 No more she fears they peace or truce can gain,
 All sides the piazza wild about does gad,
 Nor thro' her rapture can herself contain:
 Pride with her dances frolicksome and glad,
 And wood and fuel to the fires does train;
 Then bellow'd so, that to the heavens high
 She sent to Michael signs of victory.

101.

Paris then trembled, mud the Sein embrown'd,
 At the dire voice, at the so horrid roar,
 The shock does to Ardena's woods resound,
 That the wild beasts their caverns all forbore,
 The Alps, Gabenna's mount the clatter found;
 Of Blaia, Arli, of Rohan the shore,
 Garonna, Sonna, Rodano, the Rhine,
 Heard it, and mothers to their breasts their babes
 entwine.

102.

Here were five knights, who all were obstinate
 That each the first would be to end his fight,
 Involv'd, one with the other, at such rate,
 Apollo's self can't the case expedite.
 Agramant thinks the knot to separate
 O'th' first dispute, as he had heard the right,
 Which, for the daughter of king Stordilan,
 Was, 'twixt the king of Scythia and his African.

103.

King Agramant, to cause them to agree,
 This side and that to one and t'other went,
 And oft brought each to prudent memory,
 Like brother true and lord benevolent:
 But finding still, that they're deaf equally,
 Each one untam'd and obstinately bent,
 That he'll not be the man who is depriv'd
 O'th' lady, whence their difference arriv'd.

104.

At last, as to the better scheme, apply'd,
 In which they both of them might be agreed:
 That he the lady fair should make his bride,
 To whom herself the preference decreed:
 And, from whatever she herein decide,
 They neither should advance or yet recede,
 Both one and t'other pleas'd this compromise,
 Each hoping, h'ad most favour in her eyes.

CANTO XXXIII.

1.
PArrhasius, Polygnote, Timagoras,
 Protogenes, Timant, Appolodore,
 Apelles, who, than all, more famous was,
 Zeuxis and th' others in the days of yore,
 Their fame, in Clotho's spite, who sever'd has
 Their thread of life, their glorious works has tore,
 Shall fix'd remain, whilst any read or write,
 By grateful penmen thro' the world made bright.

2.
 And those, once 'mongst us, or who being have,
 Leonard, Andrew Mantegna, John Bellin,
 Two Dossi, he, who like does paint and grave,
 Michael, than mortal more, Angel divine,
 Bastian, Raphaël, Titian, who Cadore gave
 Such fame, as they gave Venice and Urbin :
 And others, of whom as rare works are seen,
 As th' ancients wrote of and believ'd have been.

3.
 These painters, whom in our own times we view,
 And those, a thousand years since, of renown,
 The things that had been, with their pencils drew,
 Some upon board and on walls others done ;
 But you ne'er heard of ancient, or yet new
 Have seen, whose art has e'er the future shown :
 And yet some histories there may be seen,
 Which painted are before the facts have been.

4.
 But, of this kind of skill, his vauntury
 Ancient or modern painter ne'er did make :
 And that art only yields to sorcery,
 At which the very sprights infernal quake.
 This hall, which the last Canto show'd to ye,
 Merlin, by book or else Avernus' lake,
 Or by th' Nurfian grotto's sacred rite,
 Caus'd be built up, by devils, in one night.

5.
 That art, with which once many a wond'rous feat
 The ancients did, in our age, lost is quite.
 But, to return, where they must for me wait,
 Who of the painted hall expect the fight :
 I say ; they to a squire did intimate
 To light the flambeaus, whence the vanquish'd
 night
 From the vast splendour vanish'd quite away,
 Nor could you there discover, but, 'twas day.

6.
 This lord said : that ye know, I am inclin'd,
 That of these wars, which here you see portray'd,
 Unto this day, few, that have been, you'll find,
 And they were painted, ere they have been made.
 Who painted them, at the same time divin'd
 When victory should gain, and when disinay'd
 Our people of Italia should be :
 In what way this is shown, you here may see.

7.
 Those wars, the French are destin'd to declare,
 This side the Alps, with luck or with disgrace,
 From his own time, up to the thousandth year,
 Merlin the prophet in this hall did place :
 Who from the British king came envoy here,
 To th' king of France, who heir to Marc'mir was.
 And, why he sent him and wherefore was done
 Such task by Merlin, briefly I'll make known.

8.
 King Fieramont, who o'er the Rhine first went
 With the French army into Gallia,
 Soon as h'ad seiz'd on that, form'd an intent,
 On haughty Italy the yoke to lay :
 This he did, 'cause the Roman government
 He saw diminishing from day to day :
 And, for such cause, made league of amity,
 With British Arthur his cotemporary.

9.
 Arthur, who enterprize ne'er set upon,
 But as the prophet Merlin gave consent,
 I mean that Merlin, call'd the devil's son,
 Who the success foresaw of each event,
 From him, knew well and made the danger known,
 To Fieramont, that woeful detriment
 He'd cause his troops, should he that land invade,
 Round which the Appennine, the Alps, and sea are
 lay'd.

10.
 Merlin then show'd to him, that almost all,
 Who after should o'er France have sov'reignty,
 Or, by the sword, their armies routed fall
 Should see, or by the plague and famine dye :
 And, that long woe, and cheerfulness but small,
 But little profit, endless misery,
 They'd bear from It'ly ; for it did not suit,
 The lilly in that land should e'er take root.

11.

King Fieramont such faith in him conceiv'd,
 He elsewhere thought to turn his armament :
 And Merlin, who as well all things perceiv'd,
 As if they had been past, before th' event,
 Did, at this king's intreaty, 'tis believ'd,
 Here, in this hall, those hist'ries represent,
 Whence of the French each future act is shown
 In way as if they'd been already done.

12.

'That each succeeding prince may comprehend,
 That, as renown and vict'ry will acquire
 He, who engages It'ly to defend,
 'Against all other sort of barb'rous ire ;
 So, should it chance, they, to her wrong, descend,
 To become lords or yoke o'er her conspire,
 May comprehend, I say, and be most sure,
 Beyond those mountains, they'll find open sepulture.

13.

So spoke : and led the ladies, where begun
 The histories : and Sigisbert did show,
 Who enterprize, for treasure, set upon,
 Which Maurice th' emp'ror does on him bestow :
 Behold him from Jove's mountain marching down,
 To Ambr's and Ticino's plain below :
 See Eutar, who not only drives him back ;
 But, vanquish'd, shatter'd, he to flight does take.

14.

See Clodovêo, who does, with armament,
 An hundred thousand, o'er the mountain pass :
 See, in that place, the duke of Benevent,
 Him, with unequal number, comes to face :
 See, how he feigns to quit th' embattled tent :
 And lays a snare : with death, and with disgrace,
 See, to the Lombard wines the Frenchmen run,
 And, like the fish, are by the bait undone.

15.

See Childibert in Italy : what host
 Of Frenchmen and commanders he has sent !
 Nor more than Clovis can he vaunt or boast
 Conquest o'er Lombardy or detriment ;
 For heav'n's sword falling does his troops accost
 With slaughter, such, fill'd is the plain's extent,
 Dead with the flux or fever's raging heat,
 In health not one in ten home does retreat.

16.

He shows king Pepin, Charles shows to him near,
 How they successive t' Italy descend :
 And how both of them joyful sequel share,
 As, her, they thither came not, to offend ;
 But, one, as the pope Stephen wrongs did bear :
 T'other does, Adrian, Leo next defend :
 One quells Astulph : t' other takes and o'erthrows
 His heir, and on the pope his honours due bestows.

17.

To them he shows, hard by, a youth Pepin,
 Who seems, to cover, with his troops immense,
 All, from the burning mount to Palestine,
 And make, by tedious work and vast expence,
 At Malamocco his superb machine,
 And near Rialto come, and fight from thence :
 Then, seems, to fly, and leave his men behind
 Drown'd ; for his bridge is broke by sea and wind.

18.

See Lewis Burgognon descending there,
 Where he appears vanquish'd and pris'ner ta'en :
 And he, who takes him, him constrains to swear,
 That 'gainst him he'll ne'er take up arms again.
 See, of his oath, he has but little care :
 See, he anew falls in the ambush lain :
 See, where he, like a mole, his eyes has lost :
 His people bearing him the Alps have crost.

19.

See Hugo d'Arli do many a grand feat,
 Who does the Berengars from It'ly chace,
 And twice or thrice does them rout and defeat :
 Now them the Hunns, now Bavares replace.
 O'erpower'd, he's compell'd for peace to treat
 Then with his foe : nor long in life he stays,
 Nor long his heir does after him remain,
 And to a Berengar yields up the whole domain.

20.

See other Charles, who It'ly, by the aid
 Of the good pastor, has with fire perplexed,
 By whom, in two fierce fights, two kings are dead,
 Manfred, the first, and Corradin the next :
 His people then with thousand wrongs invade
 Their kingdom new, which seems by tyrants vex'd.
 In diff'rent quarters, thro' the city lain,
 See, at the vesper bell, they all are slain.

21.

Then to them shows ; but interval appears
 Of many a year, nay term of longer date,
 A Gallic chieftain down the mountain bears,
 War to declare 'gainst the Visconti great,
 Who, of the French, force foot and horse prepares,
 And to take Alexandria seems to wait :
 The duke his guards, within, has posted there,
 And has, without, at little distance, lay'd a snare :

22.

And the French army of this unaware,
 Drawn by his art, where he his net applies,
 With count Armeniac, whom had carry'd there
 His guide to this unfortunate emprise,
 To Alexandria part does pris'ners bear,
 T'other part dead throughout the country lies :
 And blood and water, with an equal flow,
 Have swoln, you see, the Tanarus and crimson'd Po.

23.

One de la Marc call'd, and three Angioines
 He shows, one after t' other, and says: these
 The Bruci, Dauni, Marfi, Salentines,
 You see in what repeated manner, tease:
 Yet don't avail, tho' French with Roman joins,
 The aid so much, that they this spot can seize:
 Behold, from out the kingdom them does drive
 Alphons; then Ferrant, oft as they arrive.

24.

See Charles the eighth, who o'er the Alps descends,
 And with him has the flower of all France,
 Passes the Lire, the whole realm apprehends,
 (Without ere drawing sword or stooping lance)
 Save the rock, which over Tipheus extends,
 And o'er his arms, breast, belly, does advance:
 That, Inico of Vasto does oppose,
 In whom of Avalo the blood and valour flows.

25.

The master of this castle, who went on
 Showing to Bradamant each history,
 Soon as the isle of Ischia he had shown,
 Said, ere I lead you farther, more to see,
 I'll tell you what with me to talk upon
 Us'd my great grandfire, in my infancy:
 And what to me, in like way, he declar'd,
 Ev'n he himself had from his father heard:

36.

His fire, from other, father, it might be,
 Or grandfire, this, from that, till it came to
 Him, who had heard it from the very he,
 Who all these figures, without pencil, drew,
 Which here, in colours blue, red, white, you see.
 He heard, when he to th' king this fort did shew,
 Which now I show you, on this rock elate,
 He told him this, which to you I'll relate.

27.

He heard, that he said to him: in this place,
 From that brave knight, who this spot does defend,
 So boldly, he seems to despise the blaze
 All round, whose flames to Faro quite extend,
 Shall be born, then or in few later days,
 And caus'd him year and month to comprehend,
 A knight, to whom all will inferiour be,
 That to this time the world did ever see.

28.

Nireus was not so fair; so excellent
 In strength Achilles; nor Ulysses bold;
 Lada so swift; nor wise to such extent
 Nestor, who knew so much and was so old;
 Nor yet so lib'ral, so benevolent
 Cæsar t' have been has ancient hist'ry told:
 For, towards the man, in Ischia to have birth,
 Slight must appear of each the boasted worth.

29.

And if the ancient Crete her boast display'd,
 That Jove, in her, had his nativity,
 If Bacchus, Hercules, Thebes joyful made,
 If Delos brag'd of her twin deity,
 Neither should this isle be in silence lay'd;
 But raise, exalt herself up to the sky,
 When, in her, shall be that grand marquiss born,
 Whom heav'n benign will with each grace adorn.

30.

Merlin told him and did it oft repeat,
 That, fate his birth for that age did ordain,
 When th' Roman empire suffer'd heaviest weight,
 That, thro' him, the might liberty regain;
 But, as some acts of his I shall relate
 Anon, it suits not now I them explain.
 Such way he spoke: and turn'd to th' history,
 Where the bright proofs of Charles they were to see.

31.

Behold, he says, where Lewis does repent,
 That he in Italy caus'd Charles arrive;
 For, only his old rival to torment,
 H'ad call'd him in, and not him thence to drive,
 And that he's now his foe makes evident,
 Leagu'd with Venetians does to seize him strive:
 See, the courageous king his lance bends low,
 Opens his way and off, in spite of them, does go.

32.

But, all his people, who stay to defend
 His new gain'd empire, find a diff'rent lot;
 For, Ferrant, by the aid, which him does lend
 The lord of Mantua, so strong is got,
 That, not a soul, before one month does end,
 On land or sea is, but to death is brought.
 Then, for one man, who is by treach'ry slain,
 He seems no joy from victory to gain.

33.

Thus speaking, he the marquiss to them shows
 Alphonso of Pescar' and to them says,
 After a thousand feats, which this man does,
 Whence he will bright as the pyropus blaze,
 See, by the treach'rous snare, which for him throws,
 By a false, double treaty, Æthiop base,
 How tumbles, by the faithless arrow's wound
 The bravest knight that in those times was found.

34.

Then shows them where does the twelfth Lewis pass
 The Alps, with an Italian guide at hand,
 The lilly plants, the mulb'ry does erase
 From out of the Visconti's fertile land:
 Thence sends his troops, along by Charles's trace,
 To build a bridge on the Gariglian strand,
 Which force, hard by, is wholly routed found,
 Dispers'd or slain or in the river drown'd.

35.
Behold, in Puglia, not less butchery
On the French army; there in flight it goes:
And there's Gonsalvo Ferrant, Spaniard's he,
Who in his ambush twice did them enclose:
And as disturb'd her face shew'd formerly
Fortune, fair to king Lewis now she shows,
In the rich plain, which, t' Adria's roaring flow,
'Twixt th' Alps and Apennine, divides the Po.

36.
Thus speaking, he himself does reprehend,
That, what he first should tell, he did forbear:
And turning back, he shows the wretch, did vend
The castle, by his lord put in his care:
He shows the treach'rous Swiss, who apprehend
Him, for defence of whom their pay they share:
Which two base facts, without abasing lance,
Have giv'n the vict'ry to the king of France.

37.
Then Cæsar Borgia shows, who, by the grace
O'th' king, his pow'r o'er Italy extends;
For, of each Roman baron to take place
He seems, and them to banishment he sends:
Then shows the king, who from Bologn does
chace

The saw and there the acorns recommends:
Then, how the Genoese in flight h'as broke,
Rebels become, and on the city cast his yoke.

38.
See, says he then, with those who've found their fate
Cover'd of Ghiaradada is the plain:
It seems, to th' king each city opes its gate
And Venice scarcely can itself sustain:
See, of the pope, he will not tolerate
The passing o'er the confines of Romain,
Takes Modena from th' duke of Ferrar's hand,
Nor stops he there; but would seize all his land:

39.
And 'gainst him cause them Bologn' take away,
The Bentivoglian race come there again.
See, the French army all in faggage lay
Brescia, so soon as e'er they it regain:
And, as at once, to Felsine aid convey
While total rout the church's camp sustain:
And both the armies, in the places low
Of Chiassi's shore, in range of battle seem to show.

40.
On this, the French camp, Spanish, on that side,
Rush thick upon the plain: the fight is grand:
Here are seen fall, while red the land is dy'd,
The people arm'd compleat of either band:
With human blood each foss is full supply'd,
Mars stands in doubt, where conquest to command:
At last is seen, by one Alphonso's might,
The French remain, the Spaniard takes to flight.

41.
And, that Ravenna is in faggage cast,
The pope his lips does, thro' vexation, bite:
And, from the mountains makes, like tempest, haste
The German forces, fill'd with vengeful spite,
That all the French, ere they their foe have fac'd,
Over the Alps, he seems to put to flight:
And of the mulberry a branch to place
I'th' garden, and the golden lillies thence t' erase.

42.
See, the French come again: there see them beat
By the Helvetian faithless, whom in aid
The youth took in his pay: risk indiscrete!
By whom his fire was sold and captive made.
See, then, the army, which by such defeat
Under the wheel of fortune low was lay'd,
As now new king they have, themselves prepare
T' avenge the rout, they suffer'd at Novare.

43.
And see, with happy'r omen they come back,
See the king Francis before th' others go,
Who such way of the Swiss the pride does break,
He brings them near to total overthrow:
That the fine title they must now forsake,
Which those foul rascals had usurped so,
Of persons, haughty monarchs fit to tame,
Defenders of the christian church themselves they
name.

44.
Behold, spite of the league, he Milan takes,
And with fit terms young Sforza satisfys:
See Bourbon, who secure the city makes,
For France's king, 'gainst German injuries:
Behold, whilst the French monarch sole awakes
Elsewhere to various, noble, enterprize,
Nor knows, what haughtiness and cruelties
His people practice; they the city from him seize:

45.
See other Francis, who likeness maintains
T' his grandfire's valour, not his name alone,
Who, the French force driving from thence, regains
By th' church's favour his paternal throne.
France comes once more, but now holds in the reins,
Nor scours o'er It'ly, as they late had done;
For, near Ticine, the duke of Mantua
Bravely shuts up the passage and cuts off their way.

46.
Fred'ric, ere yet upon his cheeks advance
The primal flow'rs of manhood, himself makes
Worthy eternal fame; for, with his lance;
But more by science and vast pains he takes,
He defends Pavia from the rage of France,
And of the sea-lion the project breaks.
See the two marquisses, who both are fear'd
By all our people and by Italy rever'd.

47.

Both of one blood and of one nest both are :
 Of that marquis Alphons, the first is son,
 Who, drawn into that treach'rous negro's snare,
 Made, as you saw, the land vermilion.
 Behold, how oft, by this man's counsels rare,
 The French from Italy are forc'd to run:
 T' other, with aspect chearful and humane,
 Alfons is call'd and rule o'er Vasto does maintain.

48.

This is that val'rous knight, of whom I said,
 When to you I did th' isle of Ischia shew,
 That Merlin prophecying open lay'd
 A many things to Fieramonte's view,
 That his birth was ordain'd to be delay'd,
 Till an assistant, more than yet they knew,
 The empire, church and harra's'd Italy
 Should need, 'gainst the Barbarian's injury.

49.

He, there behind his kinsman of Pescara
 Under the lead of Prosper Colonnese,
 See, how he makes Bicocca's fort seem dear
 Ever to Swiss, more to French memories.
 See, how anew France does herself prepare,
 To reinstate each hapless enterprize:
 The king on Lombardy makes a descent,
 Another army, to take Naples, he has sent.

50.

But she, who does with us, as does the blast
 With the dry dust, which it in air wheels round,
 Raifes to heav'n, and, ere a moment's pass'd,
 Whence 'twas ta'en up, whirls it again to ground,
 Caus'd the king think, he had an army vast,
 That hundred thousand Pavia did surround,
 He, that no city scape him, quite intent,
 Not on his army's loss or increment.

51.

So, by his avaricious agent's fault,
 And the king's goodness, wh' in them did confide,
 But few unite to th' standard they exalt,
 When, in the night, to arms, the people cry'd :
 That him, within his ramparts does assault
 The cunning Spaniard, who now as him guide
 Those two of the brave blood of Avalo,
 Or up to heav'n or down to hell dares go.

52.

See, there, of the nobles throughout all France,
 The bravest warriors dead upon the ground ;
 See, what a croud immense, with sword and lance,
 The val'rous king, on ev'ry side, surround :
 See, to fall under him his steed does chance ;
 Yet yields not he himself as vanquish'd own'd :
 Tho', to him, only, run, him, sole, invade
 The hostile crew and none there gives him aid.

53.

The stout king does on foot himself defend,
 And all with hostile blood himself bedew ;
 But valour yields to too great force i'th' end,
 See the king ta'en and him in Spain you view :
 And to him of Pescara and to his friend
 Of Vasto ever his companion true,
 You see, that they the richest premiums bring,
 For a camp routed and grand captive king.

54.

One of his camps at Pavia put to rout,
 That, to seize Naples, in its progress, slain,
 See, he is in such way, as when near out
 Wax is or oyl, weak does the light remain :
 See, the king, from his Spanish prison got,
 Leaves his two sons, and turns to his domain :
 See, he makes war in It'ly, at which time,
 See, on his land, others do so by him.

55.

See the dire murders, ravages immense,
 Thro' ev'ry part of Rome in misery,
 'Mongst things divine, burnings and violence,
 And the profane ones, raging equally :
 The army of the league, not far from thence,
 The ruin sees and hears their mournful cry,
 But, where they should advance, they backward fly,
 And Peter's successor leave in captivity.

56.

The king, Lotrecco, sends, with new-raisd band,
 Not enterprize on Lombardy to make ;
 But, from the merciless and plund'ring hand,
 The head and members of the church to take :
 Which so delays, he now does understand,
 That the pope's freedom is no more at stake :
 The city does besiege, where dead was lain
 The Syren, and to him revolts the whole domain.

57.

See the imperial fleet from shore disjoin'd,
 For the besieged city's aid employ'd,
 And Doria, see, cuts off their course design'd,
 And them i'th' sea has sunk, burnt and destroy'd.
 See, fortune changes her propitious mind,
 Which, hitherto, the French so much enjoy'd :
 With fevers kills them and not by the lance,
 So that of thousands not one turns to France.

58.

Those and a many other histories,
 Which all too long would be here to relate,
 The hall contain'd, in fine and various dies ;
 For, fit to hold them was its spacious state :
 Two or three times, they turn, all to revise ;
 It seem'd, they knew not how thence to retreat :
 And oftimes read o'er, what in gold was wrote,
 Of the rich workmanship beneath the foot.

59.

The ladies fair and others, there who stay'd
Talking awhile and their amaze express'd,
Were, by the lord, to their repose convey'd;
For, honour great he us'd to show his guest.
Now all the others in soft sleep were lay'd,
Brad'mant, the last, sinks down to take her rest:
And, now, on one, now, turns, on t'other side,
On right, or left, sleep's equally deny'd.

60.

Yet clos'd her sight, somewhat ere morning broke,
In her mind's eye her Ruggier she does view,
Who to her says: thyself why dost thou shock,
Giving such credence to what is not true?
Sooner thou'lt see the river climb the rock,
Then I my thought to any turn, but you:
If thee I love not, I can't to my heart
Or pupil of my eye my love impart.

61.

And seems to add: I'm come, as now I mean
To be baptiz'd, and, all I promis'd, do:
And I've been kept, if I too slow have been,
By other wound, than that of love, from you.
Hereon fled sleep, nor longer there was seen
Her Ruggier; for now he off with it flew:
Her lamentation then renew'd the maid,
And, in her fore reflection, thus she said.

62.

What, but now, pleas'd me, was false dream, 'tis
clear:
What me torments, alas! is fight too plain:
The good was ready soon to disappear;
But, no dream is my sharp and bitter pain:
Why don't my waken'd senses see and hear
What fancy did, to see and hear, obtain?
In what condition odd, mine eyes, are ye,
That, shut, the good, open, you evil, see!

63.

The dulcet sleep now promis'd peace to me;
But bitter waking 'gainst me war does make:
The dulcet sleep has dealt with fallacy:
But bitter waking, ah! made no mistake:
If, the false pleasures, true does injury,
May all my senses ever truth forsake:
If sleeping gives me joy, and waking, pain,
May I asleep, ne'er waking, still remain.

64.

O, happy animals, whom, half the year,
With eyes unopen'd, sleep profound does hold!
That such sleep does, to death, the likeness bear,
To life, such waking, by me 'll ne'er be told:
Quite the reverse it is my fate to share,
Waking, I, death, sleeping, I life behold;
But, if of death resemblance has such sleep,
O, death, for ever, shut my eyelids keep.

6

65.

The sun had of th' horizon crimson dy'd
The parts extreme, and round were fled away
The clouds; that now appear'd, on ev'ry side,
Diff'rent from other the new-opening day:
When Bradamant, awake, her arms apply'd,
In season to return her destin'd way,
Her gratitude, to the lord, having shown,
For her good lodgment and all honours done.

66.

And found, th' embassadrefs that lady bright,
With maids and squires as suiting to her state,
Had from the castle gone, and there did light
On the three warriors, who did for her wait:
They, whom she, with her golden spear, o'er night,
Revers'd, from off their steeds, to earth had beat;
And who did, with no small distress, sustain,
That night, the heavens boist'rous, wind and rain.

67.

Add to this ill, their stomachs supperless,
As well as did their horses maws, remain'd,
Whilst, their teeth chatt'ring, the cold ground they
press;
But, haply, more it griev'd them, nay it pain'd
Them, without haply, that th' embassadrefs
Would tell, 'mongst other ills they had sustain'd,
To their dear lady, that by the first lance
They were beat down, that they had met in France.

68.

And ready or to dye or vengeance claim,
Sudden, for their late suffer'd injury,
That the embassadrefs, of whom the name
Urania is, which yet ne'er mention'd I,
The abject sentiment, which she did frame,
Might remove from them and their bravery,
Brad'mant they challenge in the tilt to fight,
Soon as she, off the bridge, appears in sight.

69.

Not thinking ne'ertheless, that she's a maid,
As she no action did of maid display:
Brad'mant refuses: as to be delay'd
She'd not admit, and would no longer stay;
But, to molest her way, such tricks they play'd,
She can't deny, lest blame might on her lay:
Lowers her lance, and, at three strokes, down casts,
The three to earth: the fight no longer lasts.

70.

For, without turning, she set to their fight
Her back far off and vanish'd from them soon.
They, who to gain the golden shield so bright,
From nations of such distance great had gone,
Soon as themselves they, speechless, rais'd upright;
For, with their courage, was their speech cast down,
Appear'd quite stupefy'd, thro' vast surprize,
Nor tow'rd's Urania durst lift up their eyes.

71.

71.

For, oft, as with her on the road they pass'd,
 They'd giv'n themselves too haughty vauntery,
 That knight nor Paladin of prowess vast
 Could stand before the weakest of them three.
 The lady, that with head yet more abas'd,
 And they no more so arrogant, might be,
 Caus'd them, that it a woman was, to know,
 Not Paladin, did them out of their saddles throw.

72.

Now, what must you conceive, to them said she,
 Since, in such way, a woman cast you down,
 Orlando or Rinaldo needs must be,
 Not without cause, esteem'd of such renown?
 If one of them the shield had, I ask ye,
 If stouter, than as yet you have been shown
 Against a lady, 'gainst them you would prove?
 I think not: haply ye such thought approve.

73.

Let this suffice: nor can your case require,
 Of each your prowess, proof more evident:
 And he of you, who rashly does desire,
 To make, with France, some new experiment,
 Does, to his loss his shame to join, conspire,
 As is to-day's and yesterday's event:
 Unless, he useful, glorious it conceive,
 When, from such warrior, he shall death receive.

74.

Soon as Ulania did most certain make
 Those cavaliers, that it had been a maid:
 Which fact did render, than the pitch more black,
 Their fame, which had been once so bright
 display'd,
 And where ten, where the case but one did lack,
 Witnesses could confirm what she had said,
 They on themselves dispos'd their arms to turn,
 By so much grief, by such rage overborne.

75.

By such vast rage, by so much fury press'd,
 From off their backs their armour all they drew,
 Nor left their swords, or aught with which they're
 dress'd,
 But all into the castle's foss they threw:
 And swore, as female thus had them suppress'd,
 And sent their backs the earth to beat anew,
 They'd be, of such great fault themselves to clear,
 Of all their arms divested, one whole year.

76.

And, that, on foot thro' ev'ry road they'd bear,
 Whether their way be plain, up hill, down dale:
 Nor, when completely finish'd be the year,
 On horse would ride or dress in coat of mail,
 If other arms and steeds they do not share,
 By fight, wherein their prowess shall prevail:
 So, without arms, for their crime's punishment,
 They march'd on foot: on horseback t'others went.

77.

Bradamant, to a castle got that night,
 Upon the road direct to Paris lain,
 That Agramant had routed been in fight
 By Charles and by her brother, news did gain:
 Good table here she found and quarters right:
 But, this and all but little eas'd her pain;
 For, little she does eat and little sleep,
 Far from reposing, she can't quiet keep.

78.

But yet of her I will not so much speak,
 To those two knights not to return again,
 Who, their two horses, did agreement make,
 Besides the lonely fountain to restrain:
 The fight, I say, which they did undertake,
 Was not of lands or empire to obtain;
 But, which the stoutest was, that may be try'd,
 The Durindan to wear and Baiard ride.

79.

Without a trumpet, or a sign to show
 When they should move; without an umpire
 nigh,
 To say, now give, or now avoid, the blow
 And to spur up their hearts to bravery,
 To their drawn swords they, by agreement, go,
 And rush each other's dextrous skill to try:
 Their frequent, heavy strokes now to be heard
 Began, and rage in either visage glar'd.

80.

Two other swords could not of proof be chose,
 That would have held out, solid, hard and sound,
 Had they by them been manag'd, for three blows,
 Which were of violence beyond all bound;
 But of so perfect temp'rament were those,
 And so secure by long experience found,
 They suited well each other to attack,
 With thousand strokes or more, yet never crack.

81.

Now, here, now, there, Rinaldo shiftings play'd,
 Watchful, with art and great dexterity,
 Durindan's mischief vast he does evade;
 For, well he knows, to bits 'twill make steel
 fly.
 Gradass his strokes more heavy would have lay'd;
 But, as in air all vanish'd, he did try:
 And, if he smote him, in such place he smote,
 Where 'twas of little weight and hurt him not.

82.

T'other with nicer skill his sword declin'd,
 And oft the Pagan's arm benumb'd did smart,
 Now at his flank and now where is conjoin'd
 The helmet with th' cuirass, he it does dart;
 But does of Adamant his armour find,
 So, that no fold he breaks or tears apart,
 So hard, so strong he proves it all about:
 This, 'cause 'twas by enchantment form'd, fell out.

83.

Without e'er making pause, they now had try'd,
 Long time, in such attention fix'd, the fight,
 That neither yet had turn'd his eyes aside,
 But on each eager visage kept their fight,
 When to another strife their minds apply'd,
 Which, from such fury, them does disunite:
 To the great noise, their eyes around they cast,
 And both Baiardo see in peril vast.

84.

Baiard they see, with monster at his back
 Fighting; it was a bird, more large than he;
 His beak of more than three yards naught did lack,
 Of the bat kind his other features be;
 Feathers he had, which were than ink more black:
 Huge claws he bore, pointed most terribly;
 His eyes were fire; most cruel was his look;
 Vast were his wings: they might for sails be took.

85.

Haply 'twas bird; but by me can't be said,
 Or where or when such other has been seen:
 I never saw nor ever elsewhere read
 Of such an animal; save in Turpin:
 On which account I am to fancy led,
 That an infernal spirit was this machine,
 Which Malagige, in such a figure, brought,
 That he might interrupt those two who fought.

86.

Rinaldo thought so too: and words of spite
 And bitterness to Malagige did say:
 He to him ne'er would own the case outright,
 And, from himself such fault to move away,
 Swore by the light that gives the sun his light,
 That this by no means ought on him to lay.
 Be bird or devil: down the monster tends
 On Baiard and him with his talons rends.

87.

The war-horse breaks his bridle instantly,
 As he was stout: and, fill'd with vengeful ire,
 Does 'gainst the bird his teeth and heels apply;
 But she up into air does swift retire:
 From thence returns, wheeling incessantly,
 Keeps beating him with her sharp talons dire:
 Baiard's enrag'd that no means, in such fight,
 He has, for his defence; so takes to sudden flight.

88.

Off flies Baiard into the neighb'ring wood,
 And, the most leafy glade to search out, try'd:
 The feather'd savage closely him persue'd,
 With eyes attentive, where was pass supply'd;
 But the brave steed does so 'mongst trees intrude,
 At last himself he in a grot does hide.
 When the wing'd monster finds no more the track,
 In search of other sport, to heaven it turns back.

89.

Rinaldo and the king Gradass, when gone
 They saw the grand occasion of their fight,
 Made an agreement, they would it postpone,
 Till from those claws they Baiard set to right,
 From which he to the wood obscure had flown:
 With pact, that he, who first should on him light,
 Should, to the fountain coming, bring him back,
 Where they might finish their commenc'd attack.

90.

Persuing him, they from the fountain hie,
 Along the tracks on the grass newly beat:
 At distance vast Baiard before does fly,
 For, him to follow, were too slow their feet.
 Gradass, who his Alfana had hard by,
 Mounts him, and thro' the forest's dark retreat,
 Far off, the Paladin behind him leaves,
 Who discontented more than ever grieves.

91.

Rinaldo in few steps the track does lose
 Of his war-horse, who wond'rous journey made,
 Who 'midst the trees and rocks his course pursues,
 Seeking each thorny brake, each savage glade,
 By hiding so, the monster to amuse,
 That swooping thus from heav'n did him invade.
 Rinaldo finding all his labour vain,
 Him to attend, to th' fountain turns again:

92.

If by Gradasso he again was brought,
 In way as late they jointly did consent;
 But, seeing fruitless to him was such thought,
 On foot, aggriev'd, towards the camp he went.
 Let's turn to th' other now, of whom the lot
 Prov'd, from Rinaldo's, wholly different:
 Not thro' his skill; but his good destiny,
 He neighing heard the gallant steed hard by.

93.

And lights upon him in a cavern deep
 By his past dread, oppress'd in such a way,
 He did not dare from out his covert creep;
 By such means in the Pagan's power he lay.
 He has in mind the pact, he ought to keep,
 That to the fountain he should him convey:
 But, to observe it, now, was disinclin'd:
 And with himself thus reason'd in his mind.

94.

With strife and war, him let who pleases claim;
 More peaceful way to have him I incline:
 From one to t'other point o'th' globe I came,
 Only with hope to make this Baiard mine.
 Now in my hands, in error he does dream,
 Who thinks, that I will ever him resign:
 'Tis suiting, if such be Rinald's intent,
 He come to India, as to France I went.

95.
No less secure for him is Serican,
Than twice has been for me the Gallic ground.
Thus speaking, by the road most strait and plain,
To Arli comes and the Armada found :

And thence, with his Baiard and Durindan,
Takes to a new pitcht galley outward bound.
But this, another time ; for now 'tis fit,
Gradaís, Rinaldo and all France I quit.

C A N T O XL.

1.
TEDIOUS t'would be, if I each accident
Inclin'd to set forth, in that naval fight :
And to tell you it, seems equivalent,
Of Hercules unconquer'd offspring bright,
To vase, as proverb says, to Samos sent,
Croc'diles to Egypt, t'Athens birds of night ;
For, what by me, but hearsay, might be told,
You saw, Sir, and caus'd others to behold.

2.
Your faithful people had before their eyes,
Long time, by night and day, that fight, who
stood
As on a stage, t'observe your enemies
Whose fleet, on th' Po, the fire and sword subdu'd:
What lamentations might be heard, what cries,
What waves be seen stain'd all with human blood,
The various ways, they perish'd, in that fight,
You saw and to the people show'd such sight.

3.
I saw it not, who, six days previously,
Changing my carriage still, thro' haste I made,
In hurry vast to th' sacred feet did fly
Of our grand pastor, to request his aid.
Then, horse we needed not or infantry ;
For, you, the claws and fangs had so dismay'd
* O'th' golden lion, that from him no wound
We, from that day to this, have ever found.

4.
But Alfons' Trotto, present he thereat,
Hannibal, Albert and Afranio,
The three Ariosti, Bagno, Zerbinatt,
So much related, I the whole did know.
The banners then did th' whole elucidate,
In numbers at the temple set to show :
And fifteen galleys, which on shore I view'd,
With thousand vessels, which there captives stood.

* The arms of Venice.

5.
Who saw those flames, those ships to ruin cast,
So many slaughters and so different,
T'avenge our palaces by fire eraz'd,
Till ta'en was the whole naval armament,
May form in mind the deaths and dangers vast
Which Afric's wretched people underwent
With Agramant, amid the briny wave,
That night obscure, when Dudon to them battle
gave.

6.
'Twas night : nor shone one single glimm'ring ray
What time commenc'd the direful, bloody fight ;
But when the tar, pitch, sulphur round did play
Profuse, and prowes and sides on fire did light,
And ships and galleys, in defenceless way,
Flames burnt, consum'd with their voracious might,
So clearly one might all around survey,
That the dark night appear'd transform'd to day.

7.
Whence Agramant, who ne'er did estimate,
Thro' the dark air, so strong the enemy,
Nor thought to find conflict so obstinate
That his force would not vanquish finally,
Soon as the darkness off from thence was beat,
And what at first he guess'd not he did see,
That th' hostile fleet was twice in number more,
Strait chang'd the thought, he had conceiv'd before.

8.
Debarks with few, where in a ship more light
H'ad Brigliador and other matters rare :
Betwixt the vessels, silent, took to flight,
Till to a sea more safe he could repair,
Far from his men oppress'd by Dudon's might,
Reduc'd to state most cruel and severe :
The sea o'erwhelms, fire burns 'em, sword does slay,
And he, the fatal cause of all, is fled away.

H

9.

Agramant flys : and took with him Sobrine,
 With whom he moans, he did not him believe,
 When he foresaw, as 'twere with sight divine,
 And told those ills, which now he does receive.
 But turn we to Orland the Paladin,
 Who, ere to aid Biserta they contrive,
 Counsels Astolf, it wholly to destroy,
 That France ne'er more it may with wars annoy.

10.

And thereupon 'twas publicly decreed,
 That in three days the camp should ready be :
 Astolf kept many vessels for this deed,
 So Dudon had not the whole company :
 To Sansonet he the command did cede,
 Warriour so stout as well by land as sea,
 And near Biserta he strong anchors cast
 At a mile's distance from that harbour vast.

11.

Orland, Astolf, as christians they, devout,
 Who without heav'n ne'er emprise undertake,
 A publick edict caus'd the camp throughout,
 That solemn pray'r and fast they all should make,
 And the third day, ready to take his route
 Should be each one, what time the signal spake,
 To storm Biserta, and when victory
 Was gain'd, to fire and plunder it should given be.

12.

And when their pray'rs and abstinence was o'er,
 Which with devotion they did celebrate,
 Friends, parents and those intimate before,
 Each other socially began to treat :
 When their faint, empty bodies they restore,
 Embracing, they their mutual tears repeat,
 Using such form, in solemn speech, they make,
 As dearest friends, when final leave they take.

13.

Within Biserta the priests sanctify'd,
 With the sad people putting up their pray'r,
 Beating their breast in broken accents sigh'd,
 Calling their Mahomet, who could not hear.
 What fatts, what off'rings all to heaven cry'd !
 What vows in secret made, of gifts most rare !
 What statues, altars, fanes to fabricate !
 Lasting remembrance of their hapless state.

14.

And soon as by the Cadi they were blest'd,
 The people arm'd and to the walls they hie'd :
 As yet was in her Tithon's bed at rest
 Aurora fair, darkness the heav'ns did hide,
 When Sans'net and Astolf in arms were drest,
 Before the ranks each taking different side :
 Soon as the signal the count caus'd them sound,
 To storm Biserta all impetuous bound.

15.

On two sides, by the sea Biserta's pent,
 On t' other two, 'tis situate upon land :
 With fabrics singular and excellent,
 In ancient times its wall was nicely plan'd :
 Now little has but bastion, battlement ;
 For since king Branzard fell in hostile hand,
 But few artificers and little space,
 He could obtain there, to repair the place.

16.

Astolfo gives th' attack to th' Moorish king,
 That to the battlements such hurt should do
 His archers, with their fiery dart and sling,
 That should discourage them their face to show,
 So that, as well of foot as horse, each wing
 Should quite beneath the walls in safety go,
 Who came there, some, with stones, some, timbers
 great,
 Some, planks, and others, things of mighty weight.

17.

Some, one thing, some, to throw, another bore,
 Into the foss, all work'd incessantly,
 Whence water was cut off the day before,
 In many parts the mud appear'd as dry :
 It instantly was fill'd and level'd o'er,
 And the plain even with the wall did lie.
 Orland, Astolf and Olivier prevail
 Upon the foot now o'er the walls to scale.

18.

The Nubians of delay impatient,
 Led by the hopes of plunder they might share,
 Regardless of the dangers imminent,
 With shields and targets they for coverings bear,,
 With batt'ring rams and various instrument
 Fit to crush tow'rs and gates asunder tear ;
 Up to the city walls impetuous bound :
 Nor unprovided they the Pagans found.

19.

Who, darts, fire, pond'rous roof and battlement,
 Thick as a tempest, down upon them throw,
 The planks and timbers vast in sunder rent
 Of those machines contriv'd to cause them woe.
 In th' air obscure and onset violent,
 The christians dreadful suff'rings undergo ;
 But from his mansion rich when Phœbus rose,
 Fortune herself averse to th' Pagans shows.

20.

On ev'ry side with violence to invade,
 By sea and land Orlando caus'd them ply,
 Sansonet, who brought up the fleet in aid,
 Ent'ring the port, came to the city nigh :
 With slings and bows a bloody war he made,
 From the machines constructed there on high :
 And spears and ladders in vast hurry sent,
 With ev'ry sort of naval armament.

21.

21.

Orlando, Olivier and Brandimart,
And he in flight thro' air so bold of late,
On that side furious combat made and smart,
Remote from sea nearer the city gate :
Each one of them advanc'd with different part
O'th' force, which they in four did separate,
Some at the walls, the gates, and some elsewhere,
All of them tokens gave of courage rare.

22.

Of each the valour one might better view
In such a way, than if confus'd in fight,
To whom reward, to whom was blemish due,
Was seen by thousands watchful with their sight.
With wheels they wooden towers thither drew,
Elephants others bore to them but light,
Which on their backs to such a height did go,
The battlements appear'd at distance great below.

23.

Brandimart comes : and to the wall applies
The ladder : mounts : does th' rest to mount
exhort :
Intrepid, sure, the many with him rise,
Ne'er doubting, they in him have safe escort :
None ever thinks to look, no one defies,
If such vast weight the ladder can support :
Brandimart, only on the foe intent,
Mounts fighting, and at last seiz'd on a battlement.

24.

There with one hand and foot fast hold he clapt :
Leaps on the parapet, his sword round cast,
Push'd, overthrew, cleft, bor'd and hack'd and rapt
And shew'd himself master of science vast ;
But all at once the faithless ladder snapt,
By the excessive weight thereon had pass'd :
And, except Brandimart, into the ditch,
Head foremost, on each other's backs they pitch.

25.

For this the knight did not his courage lose,
Nor did one thought conceive of giving ground,
Tho' of his people not one him pursues,
Tho' he himself the mark o'th' city found.
Many request ; but he deaf to them shews,
That he'd return ; but in there he does bound :
Down to the city he, I say, did fly,
Off from the wall of thirty cubits high.

26.

As if on straw or feathers he did light,
Unhurt upon the solid earth he press'd,
And those all round doos hew and hack and smite,
As they hew, hack and smite the cloth when dress'd.
'Gainst those now, now 'gainst these, does dart in fight,
And those and these to swift escape address'd :
They, who, without, had seen the leap he made
Within the walls, thought, late must prove all aid.

27.

Thro' all the camp the loud report spread wide
From voice to voice : and murmurs, whispering
prate
Fame, busy all around, still magnify'd,
And, as she tells, the danger makes more great :
There, where Orland and Otho's son abide,
(For they assault in places separate)
Where Olivier was fix'd, her flight she press'd,
Her rapid pinions suffer'd ne'er to rest.

28.

These warriors, and Orlando more than they,
Who Brandimart did love and estimate,
Hearing, that if they should too much delay,
They'll lose companion of such valour great,
The ladders seize and mount by different way,
Emulous show their royal minds elate,
With such bold semblance and so furious air,
Their very fight caus'd the foe shake with fear.

29.

As, on the sea enrag'd by stormy wind,
The waves tumultuous the rash bark invade,
Now at the prow, now at the parts behind,
Furiously search where entrance may be made :
The pilot pallid, void of heart and mind,
Bemoans and sighs, where he should lend his aid :
One wave at length seizes upon the whole,
And, where that rushes, in the rest all rowl.

30.

So when had seiz'd upon a battlement
These foremost three, the pass became so wide,
That others after them now safely went,
Who thousand ladders at the foot apply'd.
Mean time the batt'ring rams most violent,
With ruin vast, broke thro' on ev'ry side,
So that they could, by many a different part,
Assistance give to valiant Brandimart.

31.

The king superb of rivers with such ire,
When he sometimes o'er bank and bound'ries tears,
And o'er th' Oenean fields he does aspire,
Nor furrows rich or fertile corn he spares,
And with their cabins the whole flocks entire,
The shepherds with their dogs to th' waves he bears,
The fishes glide 'midst the elm's summit high,
Where late the birds accustom'd were to fly.

32.

With such a fury the croud turbulent,
Where the walls crush'd in different parts they spy,
In with their swords and burning torches went,
The people to destroy led evilly.
Murder and rapine and hands violent
In blood and their possessions, instantly
In ruin the rich, glorious city lay,
Which late had been queen of all Africa.

33.

With bodies of the dead was fill'd the whole :
 And from each numberless and various wound
 Was form'd a lake far more obscure and foul
 Than that which hell's dire city does surround :
 From house to house th' extensive flames, which rowl,
 Mosques, porticos, palaces burnt to ground :
 The noise of wailings, howlings, beating breast,
 Ceaseless, thro' empty, plunder'd mansions, were
 exprest.

34.

The cong'rours from the mournful portals press,
 All loaded with their spoils immense, one sees :
 Some, with fine vases, some, with richest dress,
 Some, plunder'd silver o'th' old deities :
 Some drag the sons, some mothers in distress.
 Rapes were committed, thousand injuries,
 Which, tho' great part were to Orlando known,
 The English duke nor he could hinder being done.

35.

Bucifar king of Algazer was dead,
 By stroke on him stout Olivier had lain :
 All hope and ev'ry comfort being fled,
 With his own hand Branzard himself had slain,
 By three such wounds, that life soon vanished :
 The duke Astolf had Folvo pris'ner ta'en.
 These were the three, which, when from thence he
 went,
 Agramant left to guard his government.

36.

Agramant, who his naval armament
 Deserted had, now with Sobrin in sight,
 Bemoan'd Biserta, did from far lament,
 Seeing on shore the fire's prodigious light :
 Then, when more near h'ad sure advertizement,
 How his whole realm was in such woeful plight,
 It enter'd in his thought himself to slay,
 And so had done ; but him Sobrin did stay.

37.

Sobrin said : what more joyful victory
 Could e'er, my lord, your enemy obtain,
 Than of your death to hear, whence quietly
 He'll hope to keep of Afric the domain ?

Such peaceful state your life does him deny,
 Whence cause of dread he ever must retain :
 He well knows, long he Africa can't hold,
 Unless your death to him the means unfold.

38.

Your subjects all you, by your death, deprive
 Of hope, the only good does now remain :
 By life, I think, you'll them to free contrive,
 To joy restore and draw them out of pain.
 I know, you dying, we still slaves shall live,
 Afric still sad in tributary chain :
 Then, tho' your life to you should useless show,
 Live, Sir, to cause not your poor subjects woe.

39.

From Ægypt's foldan to your realms so nigh
 You'll subsidies and people surely gain :
 He Pepin's son will see unwillingly
 Such stretch of pow'r o'er Africa obtain :
 King Norandin will come with full supply,
 Your kinsman he, your kingdom to regain :
 Armenian, Turk, Persian, Arabian, Mede,
 If call'd upon, will to your succour speed.

40.

With these, and such like words, th' old man dis-
 creet,
 To bring his lord to hope, us'd all his art,
 That Africa he soon again might get ;
 But the reverse perhaps fear'd in his heart :
 He well knows, what distressful terms must meet,
 And how he often must lament and smart,
 Whoe'er compell'd is his own realms to lose,
 And for their aid to the Barbarians goes.

41.

Jugartha, Hannibal * did this evince
 Fully ; and more, in ancient days, beside :
 And Lewis Moro in our own time since,
 Who in another Lewis, did confide.
 Alfons' your brother had, unhappy prince,
 Examples (Sir, this is to you apply'd)
 Who said still, arrant fool be deem'd he must,
 Who more in others than himself would trust.

* Hannibal being vanquished by the great Scipio in Africa, for fear of being betrayed by his own countrymen, fled to the protection of Antiochus ; of whose fidelity afterwards becoming doubtful, he went off to Prusias king of Bithinia, who, being then at war with Eumenes, by the sagacity of Hannibal, he in a naval conflict vanquished his enemy. Nevertheless, upon Flaminius coming to him as ambassador from the Romans, that perfidious king, without any farther application, immediately sent to seize Hannibal to give him into the power of the Romans ; which Hannibal perceiving, and being unable to fly, drank the poison, which he still kept prepared for that purpose.-----

---- It happened that Jugartha being many times overcome by Marius, fled to Bocchus king of Mauritania, his father-in-law, who envying his son-in-law's glory, sent to call Sylla, and delivered Jugartha up a prisoner to him. Marius returning and leading Jugartha bound in triumph, Sylla bore a shield whereupon was painted, King Bocchus, who had given him the aforesaid prisoner ; which circumstance proved the cause of two different factions, and was productive of infinite ill consequences, slaughters, and miseries.

42.
 * And therefore, in the war, did 'gainst him make
 The pontiff vengeful in his vast disdain,
 Altho', by reason now his force was weak,
 He to no gallant project could attain,
 And his defender was forc'd to forsake
 Italy and his foe seiz'd his domain,
 He never, or by promise or by threat,
 Was led, to others to resign his state.

43.
 King Agramant now tow'rds the east had bent
 His prow, and hasty o'er the ocean flies,
 When from the land a tempest violent
 With fierce assault seem'd on one side to rise :
 The pilot, at the steerage now intent,
 I see, said, casting o'er the main his eyes,
 A storm so terrible does now prepare,
 Our bark will not be able it to bear.

44.
 If you, my lords, to my advice attend,
 Here on the left hand is an island nigh,
 For which we strait should make, I apprehend,
 Until the fury of the sea pass by :
 King Agramant consents : and so they tend
 From danger and by th' larboard coast they hie,
 Which lay, for mariners security,
 'Twixt Afric's shore and Vulcan's furnace high.

45.
 This island void of habitation
 Was fill'd with myrtle shrubs and juniper :
 Sweet solitude, remote from ev'ry one,
 Enjoy'd the stags, the hares, the goats and deer :
 And, save to fishermen, 'tis little known,
 Who on the smooth-clipt hawthorn often here
 Their humid fishing tackle hang to dry,
 Mean time i'th' sea the fish rest quietly.

46.
 Here, that another vessel was arriv'd, they found,
 Which fortune hither did reduce and chace,
 And the brave chief, o'er Serica who's crown'd,
 When leaving Arli, guided to this place :
 Suiting their rank with reverence profound,
 On shore each king the other did embrace :
 Allies they'd been but little time before,
 And social arms 'gainst Paris' walls they bore.

47.
 Gradasso does with much displeasure know
 The adverse fate, did Agramant invade :
 Then, as prince courteous, him does comfort show,
 Of his own person offering to him made:

But, that he to those faithless realms should go,
 Would not admit, from Ægypt to seek aid :
 What risque he runs, says he, who thither flies,
 All exiles Pompey's fate should preadvise.

48.
 And as you've told me, that with a supply,
 Senapus' Æthiopic slaves in aid,
 Astolfo's come to Afric's injury,
 And its chief city has in ashes lay'd,
 And that Orlando's in his company,
 Who lately had of sense : depriv'd his head,
 Methinks, on the best remedy I've hit,
 Whereby you from your troubles all to get.

49.
 For love of you, I'll pitch on the emprise,
 The count, in single fight, to undertake :
 I, the defence, he'll use 'gainst me, despise,
 Tho' all of brass or iron were his make :
 He being dead, the christian church I prize,
 As does the famish'd wolf the lambskins weak.
 I've thought, and it seems easy to contrive,
 The Nubians soon from Africa to drive.

50.
 I'll cause the other Nubians, whom divide,
 From them, the Nile and their laws different,
 Macrobian, Arabs, those are well supply'd
 With gold and men, these with steeds excellent,
 Chaldeans, Persians, o'er all I preside,
 With numbers more under my government,
 Such war in Nubia I'll cause them maintain,
 They in your kingdoms shall not long remain.

51.
 To Agramant most suing did appear
 The second offer king Gradasso made,
 And fortune kind to him he did declare,
 Who to this desert island him convey'd ;
 But, upon no condition could he bear,
 (Biserta thence to gain if hope he had)
 Gradass, for him, that fight should undertake,
 As he thought, thus his honour was at stake.

52.
 If it be fit Orlando to defy,
 To me, he answers, suing is such fight,
 And I'm prepar'd : so may the Deity
 Grant good or ill to me as he deems right.
 Gradasso answer'd : with my scheme comply,
 Another method in my mind does light :
 By us both jointly be this combat fought
 Against Orland and one he shall choose out.

53.
 * It is said, that in the deplorable capture of Ravenna, the duke Alfonso discharging his remarkably fine artillery on their flank, tore to pieces the army of the League : which transaction excited the fury of the pope, against him. But notwithstanding the pope had caused the Swifs to make a descent upon him, and had driven the French out of Italy, who were his allies, and though the Venetian armada had besieged Ferrara, and the Spaniard had made himself master of Naples, the duke, nevertheless, would not confide in the Barbarians, so as to call them in to his assistance, much less would yield up his territories to those who applied to him to act in such manner, under pretext of their zealously defending him from that diversity of insults.

53.
I sha'n't regret, so I'm not left behind,
Said Agramant, tho' first or second I :
I know, in arms I can't a comrade find
On earth, than you, of greater bravery.
What post for me, said Sobrin, is assign'd ?
And if ye aged think me, I reply,
I ought to have experience more o' course :
And counsel good, in danger, equals force.

54.
In years advanc'd Sobrino was, but strong
And healthy, and in feats of arms renown'd :
He said: old age, where vigour does belong,
Than green and early youth is not less found :
This his demand was judg'd to be not wrong,
And messenger, without delay, was found,
Whom they dispatch'd away to Afric's shore,
And, on their parts, t' Orland the challenge bore.

55.
That he should come, in number equally,
To Lipaduse, with knights in arm'd array :
A little island this, round which does lie
Upon all sides the spacious rowling sea.
The messenger his sails and oars did ply,
As man who bound was to avoid delay,
* Till at Biserta : where Orland' he found,
The spoils and captives sharing to his troops around.

56.
The challenge of Gradals and Agramant,
And of Sobrin was publick notify'd :
So pleasing it was to the prince Anglant,
The courier with rich gifts he dignify'd :
From friends h'ad heard the news significant,
That Durindana now wore at his side
The king Gradals : whence he flam'd with desire,
To voyage into India quite, it to require.

57.
Thinking, Gradals he could not elsewhere find,
Seeing, he heard, he out of France was gone :
Now, to him chance had nearer spot assign'd,
He hop'd, he should cause be restor'd his own.
Almont's fam'd horn too now stir'd up his mind,
This challenge eagerly to enter on :
And no less Brigliador, as in the hand
Of Trojan's son him fallen he did understand.

58.
For comrades, he elected in this fight
His Brand'mart true and kinsman Olivier :
Of one and t' other he had prov'd the might,
He knows, to both he is extremely dear.
Good horse, strong coat of mail and breast plate
tight
And sword he seeks and lances ev'ry where,
For self and friends : I think, you'll bear in mind,
None in their pow'r their usual arms did find.

59.
Orlando, as to you I oft did say,
His, in his madness, scatter'd o'er the plain :
Theirs, Rodomont, from th' others, bore away,
Which in th' high tow'r, on the stream's side
remain.
Nor could be many found in Africa,
As well that, into France, for war had ta'en
King Agramant such as were fit for use,
As that all Afric could but few produce.

60.
As well the polish'd, as those rusted o'er,
What he could get, Orland caus'd them unite :
And with his comrades walking on the shore,
While he discours'd about the future fight,
It happen'd, that, now got three miles or more
Beyond the camp, raising to th' sea his sight,
He with full crouded sail a vessel spy'd,
Which did for Africa at freedom ride.

61.
Without one sailor her to navigate,
At fortune's pleasure and the wind's command,
With lofty sails the bark did forward beat,
Until she fix'd remain'd upon the strand.
But ere I more of this to you relate,
The love, I Ruggier bear, does me remand
Of him to treat, and wills, that now I tell
What to him and to Claremont's chief befel.

62.
Of those two chiefs, I said, they did retreat
From forth the settled martial enterprize,
Since the convention fix'd some did defeat,
And troops and squadrons in confusion rise :
Who first of all their oaths did violate,
And was occasion of such injuries,
If Agramant or Charles the emp'rour 'twas,
They strove to learn, of all that by them pass.

63.
I th' mean time one of Ruggier's retinue,
Who faithful was, dextrous, as well as fly,
And never of his master had lost view,
During, of the two camps, the conflict high,
To bring his sword and horse, did him pursue,
That he his people might with aid supply.
Mounting his steed, his weapon seiz'd Ruggier ;
But in the skirmish would not interfere.

64.
Thence he departs ; but first he does renew
The compact he did with Rinaldo make :
If Agramant he found t' his oath untrue,
Him, with his wicked tribe, he would forsake.
For all that day, Ruggier no feat would do
In arms ; but utmost care did take
To stop each one, and cause them to relate,
If Agramant or Charles their oath did violate.

* Suitable and elegantly-assigned occupation.

65.

He hears from ev'ry one, that, on the side
Of Agramant, the pact had first been broke :
Ruggier lov'd Agramant, and to divide
From him for this, he as great error took :
Routed the Africans were far and wide,
(As late I've said) and from the upmost spoke
Of the unstable wheel of her cast low,
Who does the world round, at her pleasure, throw.

66.

Penfive, Ruggier does in himself dispute,
If he his lord should follow or should stay:
Love of his nymph on him restraint does put,
Forbidding his return to Africa :
Him turns and twists to contrary pursuit,
Him spurs, and threats hard punishment to lay,
The thought, if he his oath should violate,
Which, with Rinaldo, he did stipulate.

67.

On t' other side, not less did spur and smite
His mind, that vigilant and anxious care,
If, in such state, he Agramant should slight,
'T would be ascrib'd to meanness and to fear :
If for his stay his reasons should seem right
To many, many them would wrong declare :
Many would say, regard should not be paid
To oath illegal and unjustly made.

68.

All this whole day and the next night he pass'd
In gloomy thought, and so the foll'wing day,
His mind still working, with doubts overcast,
Whether [he thence should go or here should
stay :
In favour of his lord concludes, at last,
To Afric, after him, he'd haste away :
Much power o'er him had connubial love ;
But duty, honour, did superior prove.

69.

Tow'rd's Arli turns, hoping to find the fleet,
Which him might bear to Afric back again ;
Nor bark i'th' sea or river could he meet,
Nor Saracin he sees, but what is slain :
Agramant took each ship, at his retreat,
And burnt what in the harbour did remain :
His thought thus frustrated, he takes his way
Towards Marseilles, trav'ling beside the sea.

70.

He thought, some vessel he should light upon,
Thro' pray'r or force, to get to t' other shore :
Now there was come the king of Denmark's son,
Whose vessels the Barbarian pris'ners bore :
A grain of millet one could not have thrown
Into the water, 'twas so cover'd o'er
Of various ships with multitude so great :
Conq'rours and captives was the pompous freight.

71.

The Pagan vessels, all which did remain,
That night, safe from the flames and shipwreck
dread,
Except a few, which to swift flight had ta'en,
Unto Marseilles Dudon now wholly lead :
Seven of those kings, who over Afric reign,
Who, when they saw their people vanquished,
Had of their seven vessels struck the sail,
Silent, with down-cast looks, their fate bewail.

72.

Dudon descended from his ship to land ;
For he would go to find out Charles that day,
And, of the slaves and spoils, a triumph grand
H'ad order'd in magnificent array :
The pris'ners were extended o'er the strand,
The Nubian victors round, in chearful way,
Throughout those regions ecch'ing loud, proclaim
Their chieftain Dudon's celebrated name.

73.

From distance far, Ruggier in hope comes on,
That this was Agramant's arm'd pow'ful fleet :
And press'd his steed, to have it clearly shown ;
But knew them, when he did more forward get,
And he in bondage, the king Nafamon,
Farurant, Brambrag, Agricalte, met,
Manilard and Balastro, Rimedont,
Who stood lamenting with dejected front.

74.

Ruggier, who loves them, could by no means bear
The mournful station, in which them he found :
With empty hand to come, he is aware,
To little, pray'r would, without force, redound :
He smites their guards, first lowering his spear,
And of his valour gives the proof renown'd ;
Then draws his sword, and, in an instant small,
Caus'd, all around him, more than hundreds fall,

75.

Dudon the noise does hear, the slaughter see,
Which Ruggier makes ; but who 'tis does not
know :
He marks his people turn about to flee
With utmost terrour, screaming cries and woe :
Steed, helmet, shield he calls for instantly ;
For, breast and arms prepar'd were for the foe :
He mounts his horse and caus'd them bring his lance,
His heart suggesting, he's a knight of France.

76.

He loudly call'd : let each one stand aside :
Makes his horse feel the spur and forward fly :
Mean time by Ruggier's hand now hundreds dy'd,
Which gave the captives hope of liberty :
And as he holy Dudon, coming, spy'd,
Mounted, alone, and the rest infantry,
He thought, this must the lord and leader be,
And against him advances eagerly.

77.

Dudon was foremost got; but instantly,
When, without lance, Ruggier was in his sight,
His own away he cast, disdainful he
With such advantage to attack a knight:
Ruggier, remarking th' act of courtesy,
Said in himself: herein I must be right,
This one is of those warriors highly fam'd,
Who, 'mong the French, the Paladins are nam'd.

78.

I'll him intreat, if able, that his name,
Ere we proceed, he will to me make known:
And so he ask'd him, and assur'd became,
That he was Dudon, Danish Uggier's son.
Dudon like answer did of Ruggier claim,
And no less courtesy by him was shown.
When they'd reveal'd their names reciprocal,
Each gave the challenge and to work they fall.

79.

Dudon now wielded that vast steely mace,
Which him in thousand feats did glory gain,
With that, he fully shows he's of the race
Of the, for lofty honour famous, Dane.
The sword, which thro' all armour will find place,
Than which the world better does not contain,
Ruggier now draws: and glorious sample gave
Of his vast prowess to Dudon the brave.

80.

But as he still retain'd in memory,
His lady least offence he could to show,
And was assur'd, if he the plain should dye
With blood of him, he wrong to her should do,
Fully appriz'd of each French family,
That Dudon's mother was, he well did know,
Armellin, Beatrice's sister, so his aunt
The latter was, mother of Bradamant.

81.

For this, he never with the point would smite,
And cautiously the edge on him did lay,
Defends himself, where'er the mace does light,
Sometimes, by parry, sometimes, giving way.
Turpin believes, 'twas Ruggier's kind foresight,
That in few strokes he Dudon did not slay:
Nor e'er, what time himself he open lay'd,
Ruggier would strike, but flatways, with his blade.

82.

Ruggier could use his sword flatways as well,
As with the edge: and vast back had the blade:
And there, as sporting oddly with a bell,
With so much force he upon Dudon lay'd,
That oftimes o'er his sight such dazzling fell,
Himself from falling off he scarcely stay'd.
But, more to pleasure those who hear my rhyme,
This Canto I'll defer till other time.

IMAGINARIA EVANUIT GLORIA.



E X T R A C T

FROM THE

INGENIOUS DEDICATION of a POEM.

THE author having set forth, in most lively imagery, and glaring colours, a rigid critic, who, as his zealous friend, censured him for a sort of approbation of the poem then on his table, causes the conversation to be continued, as follows :

I Greci soli (ripresero egli, in un tuono veramente grave, e sonoro) hanno spianata questa difficoltà; perchè essi unicamente appresero per se stessi, ed insegnarono a gli altri l'arte maravigliosissima di tessere il finto col verisimile, e cagionare per esso tutto quell' incredibil diletto, che dall' ammirabil deriva : e per non divagarmi e confondermi nella molteplicità degli esempj, vi ridurrò a memoria quel terribile cangiamento della afflittissima Niobe in sasso; mutazione, la quale (come vedete) esce fuori del tutto dal corso della natura, ma che però nel medesimo tempo non ha cosa alcuna d' inverisimile; conciossiachè la potestà di cangiamento si strano ad un celeste Nume si ascrive. Ma non così hanno pensato, nè in così fatta maniera (a dirla chiaramente fra di noi) si sono regolati i nostri Poeti Italiani, e l'Ariosto in primo luogo, il quale in questo genere ha così sconsigliatamente mancato, che quel suo Poema dell' *Orlando Furioso* non si merita altro nome, che d' un confuso ammassamento d'immaginazioni pazze e stravolte, non di Poeti ingegnosi; ma di ammalati frenetici, le quali, spogliate affatto d'ogni colore di verisimile, muovono piuttosto a compassione, che a diletto gli uomini di erudizione e di senno. In quanto a me, che l'ho letto e riletto, non ho saputo mai capire, come per esso si sia non solo per tutta l'Italia; ma per tutta la Francia, e per la Spagna ancora alzata una nominanza sì celebre; nè come mai egli s'abbia per queste nobilissime nazioni avuto tanti imitatori, di modo che per esso si è guastata e perduta, e tra loro e tra noi, tutta l'arte del ben poetare; quando per altro non sarebbe mancato loro per esempio d' un ben fatto Poema l' *Italia Liberata* del Trissino, che, a mio giudizio, è l'unico fra noi, il quale s'accolse alla

perfezione del Poema. Imperocchè in esso, e vi sono moltissime di quelle cose, che egli debbe avere, e nessuna di quelle, delle quali dovrebbe esser privo: avegnachè, nè vi sono gli anelli, che rendono altrui invisibile, nè i Gigantoni ben tarchiati, e passuti, nè le femminelle, che vestite di piastra, e di maglia facciano mirabilia con lancia, e con spada; ed altre simili bestialità, per le quali ne va sì pettoruto, e sì gonfio quel buon Messer Lodovico, il quale è tanto lontano dal meritarsi nella savia, e ben purgata opinione degli eruditi il nome di buon Poeta, che essi appena appena gli accordano quello d' un versificatore felice. Nel mentre che egli così pazzescamente bestemiava, non vi potrei dire, reveritissimo * Aci, le strane cose, che mi passarono per la mente. Pensai infino di mettergli le mani addosso, e col temperino, che aveva lì pronto, per acconciare le pene, fargli un brutto sette sul viso, ed insegnargli per un' altra volta a parlare con più giustizia delle persone di merito. Ma pure per non guastare così in un subito i fatti miei, repressi gl' impeti del giusto sdegno, e con sembiante tranquillo: Signore (disse lui) che cosa avete detto mai? Per verità tutt' altro mi farete voi credere, che quello, che è stata vostra intenzione di persuadermi. Io vi meno buono, quanto avete detto di grande, e sublime intorno all' epica Poesia; e vi meno buono altresì, che rarissimi sieno quegli ingegni, che possano tessere un bel Poema: e conchiudo con esso voi, che i due fini principalissimi dell' epica Poesia sono il dilettere e il giovare; anzi v' aggiungo, che quel Poema sarà il più bello ed il più perfetto, che sarà più ripieno di cose, che diletteranno, e saranno giovevoli insieme: ma, per questa ragione appunto, io non solamente mi discosto, ma del tutto mi divido dalla vostra, non so se invidiosa, e maligna, ma certissimo stravolta opinione, che avete concepita dell' immortale, ed in ogni tempo celebratissimo Ferrarese: e siccome, mentre avete voi favellato, non siete stato giammai da me interrotto; così usate meco altrettanto di corte-

* It is usual in Italy for persons of literature, &c. to form themselves into societies, and take fictitious names. This gentleman and his friend, with others, having stiled themselves Arcadians, as disposed to poetical studies, the above is his pastoral appellation, and the writer had assumed Tisao.

sia nell' udire le ragioni, per le quali pretendo, che voi siate in un manifestissimo errore.

Ne dubitate, che io sia per dilungarmi troppo; perchè (conforme vi è noto) il vizio, o forse la necessità d'essere oltre modo prolisso egli è per ordinario il solito rifugio di tutti coloro, che conoscendo di avere il torto, si lusingano di oscurare la verità con le ciarle. Voi avete detto, che nel dilettere principalmente consiste la bellezza del Poema epico, e che la novità, e la maraviglia, il verisimile, e il finto ben regolati e ben tessuti cagionano una soavità, ed un piacere così maraviglioso nelle menti degli uomini, che li leva affatto fuora di se stessi, e li conduce dovunque aggrada all'ingegnoso Poeta: ed in prova di questo raro mescolglio di mirabile, e di verisimile, avete portato il cangiamento di Niobe in sasso; cosa rara, come ognun vede, e perciò maravigliosa, ma fattibile; perchè operata da un dio, e perciò verisimile. O siate mille volte benedetto, e udite pazientemente quello, che sono per dirvi. Se quel Poema sarà il più bello, ed il più compiuto, che arrecherà diletto maggiore; bisognerà pure, che voi confessiate, che il Poema dell'*Orlando Furioso* sia sopra d'ogni altro bellissimo, e perfettissimo. Ma voi crollate la testa e fordidate? L'*Ariosto* (al vostro dire) con le sue fantasmie, ed immaginazioni bestiali si è tirato appresso tutta l'Italia: que' suoi Ippogrifi, quegl'incantesimi, quei sogni d'ammalati frenetici, che fanno compassione agli uomini di senno, si leggono da ogni genere di persona, non solamente senza nausea e senza ribrezzo; ma con una incredibile avidità e piacere. Alle mense de' gran signori si cantano, per rallegrarli, le sue leggiadrissime ottave; ne' ridotti degli uomini letterati, chi recita l'impazzamento d'*Orlando*, chi le querele d'Isabella, chi le smanie di Mandricardo, chi il tradimento d'Olimpia, e chi altro, simile avvenimento. Ma che spendo più parole e parlo di Letterati, e di Signori? I marinai, i vetturini, le donnicciuole stesse, mentre quelli viaggiano, e queste tessono, scemano il peso delle fastidiose lor cure, col cantare i versi dell'*Ariosto*; laddove del vostro *Trissino*, per nobilissimo Poeta ch'egli si sia, come spogliato di quel saporitissimo dolce, che tanto piace, non è alcuno, che ne parli; ma viene egli consumato dalle polvere, e dalle tignuole, e lasciato non altrimenti in un canto, che dagli amorosi giovani nelle strepitose feste di ballo alcuna curva vecchierella, e bavosa. A che dunque, per vita vostra, attribuirete voi questa sfrenata voglia, che accende gl'Italiani tutti di leggere, o di udir leggere l'*Ariosto*; e quella avidità insaziabile di vederne, se essi potessero, il fine, senza punto d'interrompimento? Non ad altro certissimamente, che a quell'infinito piacere, che inonda gli orecchi, e gli animi di tutti coloro, che lo leggono;

il qual' piacere (come voi pure diceste poco fa) è di tanta possanza, che ha tirato a se con la dolcissima sua violenza non solamente gl'Italiani, ma gli uomini ancora di là dall'alpi, e dal mare: cosa appresso di me cotanto mirabile, che non ho parole da spiegare la stima, e la venerazione, che io ho per quel gloriosissimo, e divino Poeta. Poter di Giove! Quale bellezza mai Greca, o Latina, vista, e rivista dagli uomini,aventò così gran copia d'amorose fiamme ne' petti loro; come poco, o nulla veduto (per così dire) ha di se l'*Ariosto* invaghito la maggior parte, e la più coltivata d'Europa? Imperocchè toltine noi altri Italiani, e quelle tra di noi d'un gusto più raffinato nelle lettere; chi vi è, o Francese, o Spagnuolo, che possa mai essere un ottimo conoscitore delle tante bellezze, che fanno bellissimo l'*Ariosto*? Certa cosa si è, che per molto studio, che si faccia di noi in una lingua forestiera, non si giunge mai a penetrarne quell'ultima bellezza, che vi fanno conoscere solamente quelli, che in essa nascono, ed in essa si studiano di comparire. Se dunque i nudi segni, e senza bellezza di contorno, senza varietà di colori, senza aria, senza gradazione, e senza quella simmetria, che risulta dal tutto, hanno potuto tanto in quelle straniere nazioni; che maravigliosi amori avrebbero in esse risvegliato, se li potessero vagheggiare, siccome noi, nella loro perfezione e nella loro propria veduta. Ma discendiamo al particolare, e vediamo, se veramente quelle, che voi chiamate stravaganze, e bestialità nell'*Ariosto*, sono tali.

Voi dite, che quegl'Ippogrifi non li potete soffrire; ma non mi dite il perchè. Patite voi forse di vertigini? E quello immaginarvi di volare vi conturba forse, e spaventa? Se questo egli è; purgatevi, e prendete a bere del vino amarissimo, dove abbia bollito per molto tempo l'assenzio; che così confortato di testa potrete leggere con quel piacere, che leggo io il volo del fortunato Ruggiero con la sua bellissima Angelica in groppo. Ma se poi vi dispiace come una finzione non verisimile; per questo motivo avete il torto, sì perchè appresso i Poeti è antichissimo il cavallo Pegaseo; sì perchè il forte Perseo affai prima di Ruggiero aveva liberata, stando sopra d'un alato cavallo, Andromeda, legata al duro scoglio. L'anello, che rendeva invisibili tutti coloro, che sel tenevano in bocca, l'armi fatate, i palagi incantati, e cose simili, voi li chiamate sogni, e deliri d'ammalati frenetici. Non è così? Ma ditemi per vita vostra: per qual motivo ho io da lodare, come bellissimo il ritrovamento di cangiare Niobe in sasso, e debbo vituperare tutte queste altre invenzioni dell'*Ariosto*? Perchè (dite voi) nel cangiamento di Niobe vi ebbe mano alcun Dio. Ed io vi soggiungo, che nelle cose straordinarie

straordinarie dell' Ariosto vi hanno avuto mano ben parecchi Demoni, la potestà de' quali ella è infinitamente maggiore di quello, che noi possiamo pensare. Sicchè nè pure per questo capo si rende l' Ariosto spregevole. Vi danno fastidio i Giganti? Ma forse temete voi di essere condannato a rivestirli, e fare loro le spese? Sono essi forse un ritrovamento dell' Ariosto, di modo che solo abbiamo avuto notizia di costoro per mezzo suo? Essi (come ben sapete) sono antichissimi; ed è di Fede, che sonvi stati. Ma (direte voi) non così grandi. State zitto, che hanno bevuto più grosso di noi i nostri antichi; e basti per convincervi quel solo Gigante, chiamato Encelado, che tiene il capaccio sotto il Vesuvio, la sterminata pancia nel mare, e le grandissime cosce co' mostruosi piedi sotto Etna; che, se siete buon Geometra, voi vedrete, che egli è un Gigante da non misurarsi col passetto, ma con la scala de' gradi a maniera delle provincie. Ora di questi l' Ariosto non solo non n' ha veruno, ma a mettere tutti i suoi Giganti insieme, per largo, e per lungo, non prenderebbero tanto spazio, quanto vi corre dal bellico all' inforcatura di questo sol Gigantaccio. Ma che accade, che io più mi distenda sopra di ciò; quasi che voi non sappiate, che sorta di smisurati bestioni fu quella, che mosse la formidabile guerra a Giove, dalle mani de' quali uscivano sassi così sterminati, che se cadevano in mare, formavano l' isole, e se cadevano su la piana terra, formavano i monti. Tutte cose, padron mio garbatissimo, da fare sbalordire un mulino a vento, che sempre gira, non che un uomo di qualche senno; e pure sono migliaia d' anni, che sono state dette, e forse credute, e nessuno fino a qui si è preso collera, ne si è voluto sbattezzare per causa loro, conforme per molto meno mi avete cera di volere far voi.

Della bravura poi delle Bradamanti, e delle Marfise, che a voi pare sì stravagante, e che vi rivolta lo stomaco, e v' amareggia il palato, io non voglio parlarvene; perchè non merita riguardo alcuno questo vostro dispiacimento, essendoci state infinite donne, e nella destrezza delle persone, e nel valore dell' armi celebratissime. Ma penetriamo un poco la materia più a dentro, e vediamo, che cosa hanno preteso i Poeti con queste loro invenzioni.

† *Questi draghi fatati, &c.*

Sicchè dunque per venire alla conclusione, non è poi l' Ariosto un Poeta così triviale, come lo fate; anzi se non volete impugnar la verità conosciuta, egli è senza fallo uno de' primi lumi della volgar Poesia. Forse soggiugnerete: Egli non ha osservate tutte le regole, che sono state poste al componimento del Poema epico, e che però per dolce, e soave ch' egli si sia, non gli si debba guardare in viso; anzichè di gran lunga posporlo a qualunque Poemetto arido, e disgustoso, ma fatto con regola.

Su questo punto io non voglio attaccar briga, nè con voi, nè con altri; ma servirà per rispondermi (quando mi promettiate di non averlo per male) la narrazione d' un certo Apologo, che a me pare, che al caso nostro mirabilmente egli faccia.

Avete dunque da sapere, che vennero un giorno a lite fra di loro, a cagione del canto, il Rusignuolo, e il Cuculo, stimandosi l' uno all' altro d' essere superior di gran lunga. Diceva il Cuculo, che il suo canto era continuata, naturale, e con misura; il Rusignuolo asseriva aver egli assai più armonia di quella, che qualunque altro uccello s' avesse: e quindi, per non venire alle brutte, si conchiuse tra di loro di rimettere il loro litigio al giudizio d' un terzo, qualunque si fosse: e preso il volo, nel passare sopra un verde prato, vi scorsero un solennissimo Asino con un paio d' orecchi, che erano poco meno di mezzo braccio l' uno.

Onde tutto lieto il Cuculo: Non andiamo più innanzi (disse al Rusignuolo) che i pietosi Dei ci hanno fatto dare nel giudice; perchè consistendo tutta la scienza di questa materia nell' udito, chi meglio di lui potrà dare una giusta, e ben proporzionata sentenza? E detto fatto, se ne volarono sopra un basso arboscello di pere, e sopra i suoi rami, stretti su l' ale si stettero, e quindi umilmente pregarono l' Asino, che dar volesse un incorrotto giudizio sopra la loro quistione. L' Asino, che aveva più voglia di mangiare, che di fare da giudice, appena alzò la grave testa da terra, e ritornolla ad abbassare, e date un paio di strepitose crollate d' orecchi, fece capire a' due litiganti, che per quel giorno non teneva giustizia: ma essi lo pregarono tanto, che egli per fine levatosi dal pascolare, tenendo alta la testa, e gli orecchioni ritti ritti, a maniera di lepre, quando cammina: Cantate via (disse loro) e spacciatevi; che come ascoltati

† Berni. Orlando Innamorato. Lib. I. Canto XXV. Or, see my Annotat. on the Orl. Fur. Canto VIII, published long before this poem came to my knowledge; which quotation may be attempted in English thus:

These fated dragons, this enchanting might,
These books and horns and dogs and gardens rare,
And savage men, of such gigantic height,
Monsters, wild beasts, that human semblance wear,
Are feign'd: to give the ignorant delight;
But, ye, who are endu'd with judgment clear,
Perceive the doctrines, which conceal'd we keep,
Beneath these elevated cov'rings deep.

io vi averò, vi dirò subito il mio debole sentimento. Il Cuculo si mise il primo in assetto, e disse; attendete ben, signor Giudice, alla bellezza del canto mio, che in questo punto udirete, e sopra il tutto badate all'artificio, con cui lo compongo. E quindi, fatto otto o dieci volte cu cu, gonfiatosi alquanto, e scosse tutte le sue penne, si tacque. L'Ufignolo allora, senza usare verun proemio, incominciò il suo graziosissimo gorgheggiare, e tanta varietà, bellezza, armonia risultava da' suoi soavissimi versi, che non vi era fiera in que' boschi, che, tratta dall'incredibile dolcezza, che da loro pioveva, a lui non corresse, e nel mentre che egli s'andava vieppiù nel suo canto ingolfando, il Giudice annoiato della lunga prova, mandato fuora un villanissimo raglio: Egli può essere (disse al Rufignuolo) che il tuo canto abbia più grazia di quel del Cuculo; ma quel del Cuculo ha ÷ più metodo.

La favola significa, Padrone mio bello, che, secondo la sentenza di quel giudice da quattro piedi, io ho tutti i torti, e voi avete tutte le ragioni: e siccome io non m'affanno per aver perduta la causa; così prego voi a non v'incollorire per averla vinta: anzi vi consiglio a darvi pace, e stare allegro, e ad indurtriarvi a sputar dolce, con tutto che mastichiate del fiele: e giacchè ho preso qualche confidenza con voi, e che a dirvela giusta, non mi fate punto paura; vi vo dire in segreto una cosa, che vi farà certamente maravigliare. Quel Poema, che v'ha mosso i vermini, e v'ha fatto tanto scorrubbiare contro di me, e contro quel mio amico, sappiate, ch'egli è farina del

mio sacco, opera delle mie mani, e in una parola, che l'ho fatto io, e l'ho fatto a pezzi, e bocconi, conforme m'è paruto, e piaciuto, e sono andato avanti (come si suol dire) a occhi, e croce; nè ho pensato più che tanto alle regole, ed a' precetti, ma solamente ho avuto un certo discernimento da non fare qualche cosa di mostruoso, cio è a dire, di non fare un corpo con cinque, o sei capi; ma con un capo solo, e così dell'altre parti, che data proporzione ad un ben fatto corpo convengono. Del resto io non ho avuto altro fine, che di piacere, e principalmente a me, e poi di mano in mano a coloro, che forse una volta lo leggeranno.

Imperocchè gli uomini, quando sono veramente oppressi, o dal peso delle fatiche, o dalla malvagità della fortuna, o dalle pubbliche cure, vogliono rallegrarsi: e siccome la maestra natura conduce quasi a mano gli animali tutti a cercare quella sorte di cibo, che loro più si confaccia; così per la medesima siamo internamente mossi nell'avvilimento dello spirito a cercare di conforto, e di sollievo; nè alcuno v'è nè più atto nè più efficace a rallegrarci in un subito, che d'un grazioso componimento poetico. Onde se questa mia operetta verrà mai ad ottenere un fine così discreto, ed umano; vi giuro, che ne farò contentissimo, assicurandovi, che verun conto non farò mai di quello, che possiate dir voi, o gli uomini, siccome voi, quando fate un giudizio così pazzo, e bestiale del più celebre, e del più ragguardevol Poeta, che abbiamo. Ciò detto mi tacqui: ed egli ad un tratto nelle sue smanie tornato, senza altro dirmi, partissi.

" ÷ Why let the stricken deer go weep."

HAMLET.

" Critics affect to write like lawgivers; but we oft. n see them biased by resentments of real or imaginary injuries, or by their friendship with those who are interested in a cause: and sometimes they take a dislike to a subject, which they have not examined, or do not understand."

HANWAY.

ALTHOUGH

ALTHOUGH there scarce can need any more convincing proof of the estimation, in which this divine poet has ever been held, by his own nation in particular, yet the following transcripts may be a more solemn instance of even the commencement and continuance of such immense regard conceived towards him, as well at the time of his death, as in the subsequent years.—

“ In the magnificent church of the Benedictine friars at Ferrara, on the left side, upon a column, you read this inscription to—*The Prince of the Italian Poets.*”

D : O : M.

LUDOVICO AREOSTO POETÆ PATRITIO FERRARIENSI ;
 AUGUSTINUS MUSTUS. TANTO VIRO, AC DE SE BENE
 MEREN : TUMULUM, & EFFIGIEM MARMOREAM,
 ÆRE PROPRIO, P : C. ANNO SALUTIS MDLXXXVIII.
 ALPHONSO SECUNDO DUCE.—VIXIT ANNOS 59. OBIIT
 ANNO SAL : 1533. 8. IDUS JUNIJ.—

“ And a little lower, being the composition of Lorenzi Frizoli.”

*Hic AREOSTUS situs est, qui Comico
 Aures sparfit Theatri urbanos sale :
 Satyræque mores strinxit Acer improbos :
 Heroa culto qui Furentem carmine,
 Dumumque, curas cecinit, ac prælia.
 Vates coronâ dignus unus triplici,
 Cui trina constant, quæ fuere vatibus
 Graiis, Latinis, vixque Hetruscis, singula †.*

Which may be rendered thus :

Here lies ARIOSTO : who, with *Comic Vein*,
 Theatric ears polite could entertain :
 Whose *Satyr* keenly scourg'd the vicious age :
 Whose well-turn'd verse the *Hero's* Wond'rous *Rage*
 Chanted, the grove, his pangs, and battles rare :
 Bard, sole, deserving triple crown to wear !
 Those trinal honours, *singly*, poets own,
 Greeks, Romans, Tuscans, he possess'd, *Alone.*

† It is strongly to be suspected, Dryden had this inscription in view, when he wrote his so celebrated epigram on Milton : but if so, he has scarce made a change for the better. As the turn of this is, most assuredly, more easy, natural, noble --- than --- denying the *Power of Nature*, and then giving her an *unnatural* (not to say flat and absurd) operation --- *making a Third* --- and --- *joining the former Two.*

It is submitted to the reader, whether what follows may be considered as an improvement :

*Nature, to cause her utmost force be shown,
 The Gifts the Two enjoy'd, bestow'd on ONE.*

“ Then,

“ Then, entering into the monastery, you see a little, antique chapel, where,
 “ for a long time, were preserved, with great veneration, the bones of ARIOSTO :
 “ and on the wall is still remaining,”

*Qui giace l' ARIOSTO : Arabi odori
 Spiegate, o aure, a questa tomba intorno :
 Tomba ben degna d' immortali honori ;
 Ma troppo a sì gran busto humil soggiorno !
 Ossa felici, voi d' incensi, e fiori
 Habbiate il viso ogn' hor cinto e adorno :
 E da li Hesperii liti, e da li Eöi
 Vengan mille bell' alme a veder Voi.*

*Qui giace quel, che 'l seme di Ruggiero
 Cantò, e 'l valor del gran signor d' Anglante.
 Voi, che mossi d' ardente alto pensiero
 Fermate i passi al suo sepolcro avante,
 Dite (nè pur in parte andrete al vero)
 Che 'n quanto è sotto al gran peso d' Atlante,
 Di cui non fu di Cinto il sacro regno
 Spirto più bel, nè più sublime ingegno.*

Attempted thus in English :

Here lies ARIOST. Arabian perfumes sweet,
 Ye gentle breezes, o'er this tomb spread round ;
 Tomb, to enjoy immortal honours, meet :
 But humble spot, for body so renown'd !
 With incense, happy bones, and flow'rs replete,
 May ye remain, ever adorn'd and crown'd :
 And, from th' Hesperian to th' Eöan sea,
 May thousand wits exalted come to visit thee !

Here lies that bard, whose verse, of Ruggier's seed,
 And the great lord of Anglant's, feats displays.
 Ye, whom here noble thoughts attentive lead,
 Who stop, upon this sepulchre to gaze,
 Say (nor the strictest truth will ye exceed)
 Beneath the weight which Atlas once did raise,
 Throughout all Cinthus' realms, ne'er was, than him,
 Spirit more lofty, genius more sublime.

N. B. Some readers having wished, that the few Italian quotations in my book of Annotations, had been rendered into English, this superfluous page gives an opportunity for my compliance therewith, as well as I am capable.---

CANTO VI.

Turpin relates here, &c.
Since he was an archbishop, we must need
Let what he says, tho' falsehood, pass for creed.

CANTO XXIV.

— I wail your destiny :
But not my own ; since at your side I die.

CANTO XXXIV.

O'th' Lestrignons, who joy man's flesh to eat,
Our country may be deem'd quite opulent,
Who have such monstrous teeth and talons great,
And beards and noses vast and eyebrows bent :
These are your courtiers, patrons, vile, elate,
Whose minds on mischief ever are intent :
The traitors eat the flesh, and drink the blood
Of the poor wretches in their servitude.

STANZA 2.

Of one they eat the head, &c.



ERRATA.

Canto XXII. stanza 42. line 2. dreadful news : — her.

94. 4. as those.

Canto XXV. stanza 53. line 2. me Brad'mant.

